I.D.C.C.

THE ROCKET'S BLAST COMICOLLECTOR NO. 132

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FRONT COVER - MIKE ZECK
BACK COVER - RALPH FOWLER

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DECEMBER 1976

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AVAILABLE BACK ISSUES OF THE RB&CC ARE LISTED BELOW. THEY ARE $1.75 EACH FROM THE S.F.C.A.

#'s 57, 58, 106, 107, 117, 120, 121, 123, 124, 125, 127, 129, 130, 131

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STAFF ARTISTS: Brad Epstein, Ralph Fowler, Mike McKenney, Don Rosa, Bob Susor and Mike Zeck.
Contributions are always welcomed, but if you want it returned be sure to include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

THE ADVERTISING DEADLINES FOR THE NEXT TWO ISSUES OF THE RBCC ARE: JAN. 7
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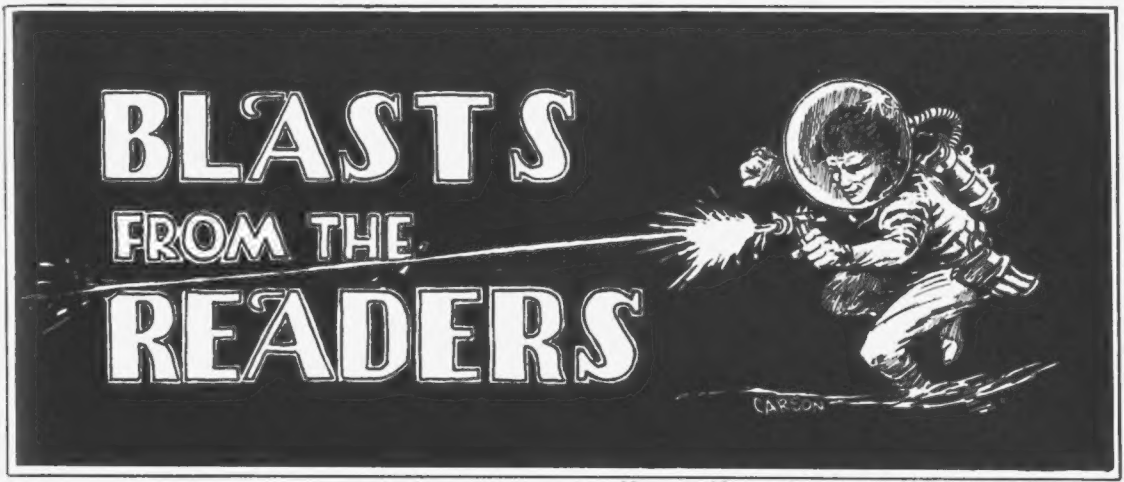


ANOTHER NEW PLACE

EDITORIAL

As you may have noticed from the above heading, I've moved again. Now you have to change your files and I have to endure forwarded mail until this all levels out again. This time the location is definitely secure for a good while. My new address is all over the magazine in my ads, etc., but just to make sure you don't miss it it's 6351 S.W. 43 Street, Miami, Fla. 33155.

Last issue I inadvertantly neglected to credit Alex Koehn for the title page drawing, the "Ray Bradbury" logo in "The Sounds of Ray Bradbury" article, and for several of the old newspaper articles in the "Bradbury Archives" section.

The Tom Sutton original to the front cover of the King Kong issue is still available from him for $100.00, and Tom's address is: 40 Marlboro Street, Newburyport, Mass. 01950. For those of you who lack the Kong issue you can get a look at a much reduced version of that cover on the RBCC back issues page in the rear of this magazine, right after the "Ye Olde Fanzine Shop".

Another original which is for sale is the Iron Fist drawing by Mike Zeck which is printed full page opposite his profile. This original is 12" X 15" and is available from me for $20.00. I am also selling those five pages of "Subjectivity" which Mike did in an ad elsewhere in this issue.

I've had several people write me complaining about problems they've had dealing with Middle Earth. I recently had a long phone conversation with them and they assured me that they would refund any money requested. They've had a shake-up in management recently and other problems but they said that refunds will be made with 30 days after they've been requested. In the case of the Barry Smith Robert E. Howard Memorial Portfolio you must include the portfolio number when requesting refund as the files on that item are arranged differently than the others. They are supposed to be issuing a new, updated catalog in the near future. Many items have been delayed (The Kaluta Shadow, Frazetta Women of the Ages, Neal Adams Bruce Lee) but others have just been published such as the Brunner Bran Mak Morn and the Ploog portfolio. Refunds will be made on anything not yet published if you so request. Mention my name when writing them and contact me if any problems arise. Again, allow them 4-6 weeks to get you the refund before you write complaining to me.

Next issue will feature a full color front cover painting by Frank Brunner. This is a brand new never before published piece. It will be offered for sale from him in that issue as well.

Also next issue will be a back cover by Mike Zeck of The Destroyer, as well as a previously unpublished interview with political cartoonist Jeff MacNelly. If space allows there will also be a previously unpublished interview with the late Moe Howard of The Three Stooges.

I'm also amassing material for another special issue, this time on Flash Gordon. It will include a satire by Ron Wilber, art by Steve Fabian, Mike Zeck, Tom Sutton and others, as well as some surprises. I'm aware of how much this subject has been done but I feel that I'll be adding some new twists. There will also be a long article on the film FLESH GORDON for which I already have several pieces of fine art by Bruce Patterson and hope to have some art for it by Ralph Fowler as well. The exact issue number of this special will be announced here soon.

Of the three SILENT RUNNING illustrations by Ralph Fowler in this RBCC, the two accompanying the article itself (not the back cover) are for sale. Write to me if you're interested and I'll pass your letters along to Ralph.

The ARTIST PROFILE feature which begins this issue is another new regular feature which will appear each issue and profile a regular artist on the RBCC staff, including Steve Fabian, Tom Sutton, Ron Wilber and Ralph Fowler.

When I took over the RBCC from former publisher and founder G.B. Love, all he wanted to do at that time was get out from under the rigors of publishing a magazine on a regular schedule. He'd been doing so for 13 years and he wanted a change. That was two and one-half years ago (Even I can hardly believe it's been that long already!). Well, G.B. is getting back into publishing full swing. His Star Trek zine TREK has gone bimonthly and takes subscriptions, and G.B. has just published the first two issues of his new title ART FANTASTIQUE (see ads elsewhere in this issue) with more to follow soon. Some of them I'll be involved in to varying degrees, such as one dealing with Steve Fabian. So watch future issues of the RBCC.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Dear Jim,

I had to wait till I quit IC (temporarily, as it turned out) to get the best IC letter of all. Some kid (?) who didn't subscribe to RBCC wanted me to answer his questions by mail personally with very detailed replies, PLUS illustrations! His questions were, every

last one, the MOST basic type that would each take HOURS of research & typing, no exaggeration! Things like "Who was the Green Goblin?" or "Who were each of the JLA?" or "Who was the Blue Beetle?" or "Please do an index of DC's giant comics, giving the source of each reprint?"...and each time he asked "Who was...?" he made it explicitly clear that he wanted EVERY detail of the character's entire life...name, occupation, list of appearances, personal history. In the case of groups, he wanted individual treatments on each member. What he wanted was an article written & illustrated on each question JUST for him. You think that's the end? How many questions do you think he asked? He sent in 102 multiple part questions in one letter!!!!! You think that's the end? ONE DAY LATER HE SENDS ME 54 MORE!!!!! It was hilarious! I wish I could've saved the letters, but they were SO long that I thought I'd better return them (after all he sent me all of 8 stamps!). It would have been the most priceless practical joke anyone ever played on me--only the guy was serious! That's worth mentioning somewhere in RBCC since I won't give you his name (& he doesn't get RBCC anyhow). Truth is much more stranger than fiction!!!!!!

Don Rosa
7410 Woodhill Valley Road
Louisville, Ky. 40222

THE FOLLOWING LETTER IS BEING PRINTED WORD FOR WORD, LETTER FOR LETTER AS I RECEIVED IT. I SHOULD ALSO POINT OUT THAT THIS PERSON ALSO WROTE TO DON ROSA TO ATTEMPT TO GET HIM TO "PRESSURE" ME INTO PRINTING A RETRACTION OF THE "2001" REVIEW THAT RAN IN RBCC #129. NEEDLESS TO SAY, DON DID NOT THINK HIGHLY OF THE ATTEMPT. SINCE I HAVE ALREADY SENT A LONG, BLISTERING PERSONAL REPLY TO MR. MCHUGH, I HAVE ALLOWED MIKE McKENNEY TO REPLY TO THE LETTER HERE IN THE RBCC.

Dear Mr. Van hise:

I have been reading your magazine for some time, and, after the last issue(king kong),I'm begining to think that it has been too long! I MUST take issue with mike mckenny (and you) for his "critique" of jack kirby's excellent verson of "2001". While I full well realise that "critique" is basicly a "review-type" column ,I must question your(or should I say mckenny) calling jack kirby a"hack". I would except (and approve) you to both give your honest opinions of this piece of work ,but you have taken a "tone" which calls ALL of mr. kirby's work "garbage". Mr. kirby is an excellent artist/storyteller and even if you did not "understand" his work on 2001, you should not have cast aspersions on his ability or ethics(the "critique" assumed that his main "concern" was money). Frankly,as an editor myself,I cannot,for the life of me,understand how you allowed this "GEM" to reach print. I would have excersised more discreation than than to let some unknown, untalented artist vent his jealouslyand frustration(a glance at the mckenny art in the same issue tells the "story") on one of the comic arts greatest talent's in my magazine,and I stongly suggest that you do the same in the future,if after this your magazine indeed has one!

I must also take up the defense of the comic itself. I ,as well as all the staff members of HOTCHA (artists included),thought that Mr. kirby did an excellent job and I personally felt that the FEW "liberties"(such as substituting 20 apes for 50-ever try to draw 50 apes in ONE comic panel) were justified as this was a comic-not a MOTION picture. I am also intreagued by the prospect of a "2001 series".As far as I am concerned,virtually ANY subject can be made into a comic (or motion picture) if handled properly.

I do prefer the statement by K.DON ROSA (in the same issue-no less)! He seems to understand the true greatness of jack kirby's work,and ,even if he didliked one particular piece of work by Mr,kirby, He would not have discribed him in the term's that mckenny did. I do not understand how you can "repay" Mr.kirby(and MARVELcomics-who have given R.B.C.C. many FREE plugs) [EDITOR'S NOTE: NOW HOLD IT RIGHT THERE! THE ONLY FREE PLUG THAT I KNOW OF IN A MARVEL COMIC FOR RBCC WAS IN FANTASTIC FOUR #22. ALL THE REST OF THE PUBLICITY THAT G.B. & RBCC RECEIVED FROM MARVEL WAS IN THE FORM OF ADS WHICH G.B. LOVE BOUGHT AND PAID FOR IN EXCESS OF $300.00 EACH FOR JUST VERY SMALL ADS.] for ALL the years of comics pleasure in the manner in which you did.It also supprises me that you can so easily"bite the hand that feeds you".Any magazine which calls itself a "comic collector" should be a bit more respectful to the man who has,almost single handedly, been responsible for that about which you write each month! I have noted in recient issues of you magazine that the only enjoyable stuff seems to be the "rosa stuff". Perhaps he should take-over as editor.This would leave you(and mike mckenny)free to follow other persuits to which you both seem more suited-like taking over RONA BARETT'S gossip column.

If you feel that I have "overreacted" to your "critique", it is because I feel very strongly about JACK KIRBY and your policies as an editor.If you care to send me an explanation,or a rebuittal it will be welcome,but while your writing letters,you should send jack kirby a personal apology-I believe you owe him one!

LAWRENCE MCHUGH
EDITOR-PUBLISHER
HOTCHA MAGAZINE
LAKE WORTH,FLA. 33406

MY DEAR MR. McHUGH,

I DO NOT KNOW YOU (NOR DO I WANT TO) AND YOU DO NOT KNOW ME (THANK GOODNESS). THEREFORE YOUR COMMENTS ABOUT ME ARE OBVIOUSLY SOMETHING YOU HAVE MANUFACTURED FOR YOUR OWN PURPOSES - WHATEVER THEY MAY BE. ((OH GOD, I DIDN'T REALISE THAT MY ANONYMITY, LACK OF TALENT, JEALOUSY [OF KIRBY???] AND FRUSTRATION SHOWED SO MUCH IN MY KONG DRAWING! - I PROMISE I'LL BE VERY CAREFUL AND NOT LET IT HAPPEN AGAIN!))

I CANNOT HELP BUT SERIOUSLY QUESTION YOUR MOTIVES (AND STATE OF MIND) WHEN YOU TRY TO ENLIST THE AID OF DON ROSA AGAINST JIM AND MYSELF. BUT I WILL TRY AND CLARIFY SOME OF THE POINTS YOU RAISED FOR ALL OF THE OTHER KIRBY FANS WHO READ THE R.B.C.C.

THE NUMBER OF APES, CHANGED FROM 50 TO 20, WAS MADE IN THE CAPTION WHERE IT WAS TOTALLY UNNECESSARY. YOU DIDN'T REALLY THINK THAT I EXPECTED KIRBY TO DRAW 50, OR EVEN 20 APES IN ONE PANEL, DID YOU? 50 IS THE NUMBER CLARKE USES IN THE BOOK.

WHAT I SAID IN THE REVIEW WAS MY HONEST OPINION OF KIRBY'S WORK. IT WAS NOT OBJECTIVE, I NEVER CLAIMED IT WAS, BUT IT WAS HONEST. I BELIEVE THERE ARE A LARGE NUMBER OF COMIC FANS WHO FEEL EXACTLY AS I DO ABOUT KIRBY'S WORK, BUT NO ONE, THAT I KNOW OF,HAS, UNTIL MY REVIEW APPEARED, EXPRESSED THIS VIEW PUBLICLY AND IN PRINT.

MAKE NO MISTAKE, I GREW UP ON KIRBY'S EARLY MARVEL WORK, AND I LOVED IT. BUT I CONTINUED TO GROW UP AND DISCOVERED WOOD, WILLIAMSON AND E.C. COMICS. I FOUND I COULD NOT GO BACK TO MY PREVIOUS TASTES BECAUSE OF ONE SIMPLE FACT-KIRBY'S WORK IS FOR KIDS. UNFORTUNATELY MARVEL LET HIM ADAPT 2001, WHICH DEALS WITH THE MOST SOPHISTICATED, PHILOSOPHICAL IDEAS THAT MANKIND HAS PONDERED ABOUT ITS EXISTANCE. KIRBY DOING 2001 IS LIKE ERNIE BUSHMILLER DRAWING "HAMLET"-THERE IS JUST NO WAY IT CAN WORK SUCCESSFULLY.

I MET MR. KIRBY AT MIAMICON LAST DECEMBER AND I FOUND HIM TO BE A VERY NICE, WARM PERSON. MY OPINIONS OF HIS WORK DO NOT REFLECT UPON HIM PERSONALLY. I DO NOT FEEL THAT I ONE HIM AN APOLOGY, NOR DO I THINK HE WOULD WANT ONE FROM SOMEONE WHO HAPPENS TO DISLIKE HIS WORK AND CHOOSES TO EXPRESS HIS OPINIONS PUBLICLY.

MIKE McKENNEY

Dear Mr. Van Hise,

Judging by Ralph Fowler's "2001" illustration on RBCC #130, it would appear that fandom is most unfortunate that it was not Ralph, instead of Jack Kirby, who did the artwork on Marvel's "2001" adaptation.

Kevin M. Glover
Highland, Ca. 92346

FILMS FANTASTIQUE

"SILENT RUNNING"

BY JAMES VAN HISE

In 1972, Universal studios released the first major outer space science fiction film since "2001". It was only fitting that the special effects genius behind "2001" also engineered this film.

Douglas Trumbull, who did the special effects for "2001" and later "The Andromeda Strain", not only conceived SILENT RUNNING, but also directed it and was the chief special effects technician.

Although Kubrick virtually took credit for everything in "2001" up to and including the special effects, Trumbull was recognized by those in the know as to his real contributions. Brian Johnson, late of SPACE: 1999, is often given more than his share of the credit regarding the special effects in "2001" when actually all he did was construct the models which Trumbull used his talent to photograph.

SILENT RUNNING was the first sf film to really show the mark "2001" had made on the industry. The fact that it was not a true financial or critical success does not in any way diminish its importance as it has attracted a following among aficionados which rivals that of "2001" itself.

This film combined elements which in some ways made it more popular among many fans than "2001" itself. These elements were primarily personified in the form of Bruce Dern, as Freeman Lowell, and the very endearing machines, the Drones.

This film marked the turning point in the career of Bruce Dern. The fact that he has appeared in many fine and admired films in the past four years, such as THE GREAT GATSBY, SMILE, THE FAMILY PLOT and BLACK SUNDAY, bear this statement out.

Before his role in SILENT RUNNING, Bruce Dern was a second string actor, inevitably playing not just villains, but psychotics and weirdos. Dern had been in films for 15 years before he played the sympathetic lead in SILENT RUNNING. Shortly before this he had considered his career at a standstill and going nowhere. He had become typecast after appearing in an episode of the old "Alfred Hitchcock Presents" in which he played a psychotic hillbilly peach picker who terrorized Teresa Wright and made her eat a dead squirrel. For years following those were the only kind of roles he was offered.

He had a good role in CASTLE KEEP with Burt Lancaster but the film died at the box office and received poor reviews, thus ruining his hopes of it being a springboard for his career. Dern had a respectable role in the film DRIVE, HE SAID with Jack Nicholson but it also did poorly. But he did receive some recognition. It may have been this recognition which brought him to the attention of Douglas Trumbull.

Bruce Dern had determined even before SILENT RUNNING was offered to him that he wanted to change the direction of his career. He had stopped accepting roles which required him to play sickies...and didn't work for eight months as a result. "1970 was the worst year of my life", he has said of that period. Then Trumbull offered him the lead in SILENT RUNNING. Even after

RALPH

visiting Trumbull and reading for it he still didn't think he'd get the part. But even before Dern had gotten home from the interview, Trumbull had called and left the message that the part was his.

But Dern's pessimism continued even after he had finished the film. He was confident in what he had done but he knew little about Trumbull or what he could do. SILENT RUNNING was the first film Trumbull had directed. Dern feared that the special effects would come off looking cheap and ruin the film. He was pleasantly surprised. Dern was amazed at how real it all looked and stated that SILENT RUNNING, which had been made for one million, three hundred thousand dollars, came off looking like a ten million dollar film!

How right he was.

But before SILENT RUNNING was released, Dern took another role as a film psycho, this time in a much better film than those in which he had reprised the same type of character. It was THE COWBOYS with John Wayne. The fact that Dern was able to play opposite such a cinema superstar may have been why he accepted it for he found the psychotic role this time to be very demanding of him, difficult for him to play, to relate to, after playing such a protagonist in SILENT RUNNING. When it came time for him to put a knife through a child's throat in the film, he couldn't do it.

But THE COWBOYS did have its advantages. Dern got to shoot John Wayne in the back! John Wayne teased him about it saying, "When you kill me, boy, are they gonna hiss."

"Yeah," retorted Dern, "in Orange County I'm dead, but in Berkeley they're gonna give me a standing ovation!" I know I did.

Dern's co-stars not only supported him well, but in many scenes stole the show. Not bad for characters that weren't even supposed to be human.

The Drones are easily the most indentifiable feature of the film. If you're ever discussing the film with someone who isn't sure if they remember seeing it, all you need do is describe the little robots with the lurching gait. The characteristics they embodied in the film set them apart from the rest of the hardware for even though they didn't speak, other than making little squeaking noises, they nonetheless had personalities.

What made them interesting, other than some of the traits I'll mention, is that the Drones weren't just controlled by voice command, but also had programming discs which had them going about previously appointed tasks on the ship. Their human-like personalities became evident in little idiosyncrasies such as one tapping his foot while he waits impatiently for Lowell, and then giving the other a kick in the side when Lowell shows up. This scene more than any other established the Drones as more than machine in the film.

The idea of having Lowell inter-relate with the Drones was Dern's. Trumbull wanted the relationship to be less serious, more tongue-in-cheek. They argued about this and finally Trumbull had Dern try it both ways in front of the camera. He relented and admitted that Dern was right. He later confided, after the film was completed, that he was glad Dern talked him out of the other approach as it would have been a disaster.

Dern felt that even though the Drone was a machine, or as he called it, a box, the audience had to believe that it had some kind of personality, was in some way alive in a way that was different from ordinary machine life. In this way the audience would accept the lone dome drifting in space, tended by the lone Drone for the time when mankind was once again ready to replant the forests of the Earth.

One of the criticisms leveled at the film concerned the fact that there was never any explanation given for what had devastated the Earth and caused the forest domes to be established around Saturn. There was also the question raised about how could the Earth sustain itself without the oxygen producing cycle present in all

plant life. With no plant life to replenish the air, the Earth would die. Rather than arguing about this endlessly one just has to assume that a substitute method was found with the advanced science present in our society one hundred years in the future. I don't think that's such an impossible assumption when one considers the strides made by science in just the last fifty years. After all, it hasn't even been 75 years since the airplane was first perfected and we're already reaching out to other planets. Even twenty years ago most people considered that to be unlikely to be happening as soon as this.

Getting back to the Drones, it has become pretty much common knowledge that they weren't real robots. Just as the robots in FORBIDDEN PLANET and LOST IN SPACE had people operating them from the inside, so to did the Drones. But in the case of the tiny Drones it required more imagination.

As you can plainly see from the photo on this page of Lowell with the Drones, they aren't very large. Thus the people needed to operate them couldn't be very large, and even dwarfs were too large.

Trumbull got the idea for the type of person to use after seeing the Tod Browning film classic, FREAKS. It contained an actor with no legs who could walk on his hands and even balance on one when drinking out of a cup. The dexterity amazed him.

Trumbull first contacted the Veterans' Administration in Los Angeles where he met George McCart, a man who had lost his legs in Viet Nam. George was too heavy-set to be a Drone but he was a good engineer and helped Trumbull design the Drone outfits and work on the models. The actual actors who worked in the suits were recruited through Children's Hospital and U.C.L.A. prosthetic devices center. There were four people who changed off working in the four Drones: Steve Brown,15; Larry Wisenhunt, 17; Cheryl Sparks, 18; and Mark Parsons, 23.

The September, 1971 issue of ESQUIRE had a six page spread of color pictures of the actors who played the Drones and included a photo of one inside a Drone as well as a full page photo of a Drone itself. Some of the people on the production crew, most notably Doug Trumbull himself, felt the article was in poor taste

as the photos tended to exploit the actors' disabilities. But then ESQUIRE has always done things in an unusual manner no matter what it was.

The Drone body units are made of lightweight plastic but still weighed between twenty and thirty pounds. It took fifteen minutes for an actor to get suited up, but unlike previous robot suits in past films, the actor didn't have to worry about suffering acute claustrophobia as the louvered section on the front of the Drone could pop off so the actor could relax and snack in between takes. When a Drone had to be in motion, thus requiring the actor to be carrying that unit on his back, the working Drone arm, which weighed about five pounds just by itself, was removed and replaced with a dummy made of lightweight plastic. To conserve the Drone operator's energy, a dolly was used to lift up the Drone and move it around on the set between takes.

This all takes us up to the sets themselves, the interiors of what was supposed to be the mammoth spaceship The Valley Forge. To achieve the maximum in realism without building expensive sets from scratch, the film was not shot at Universal studios at all. It was filmed on location. On location at Trumbull's studio at Canoga Park, Cal. for the special effects involving miniatures. On location at Hangar Number One for the interiors of the domes (shot at Van Nuys Airport). And on location in the gutted hulk of the USS Valley Forge, a decommissioned aircraft carrier awaiting destruction at the Terminal Island Naval Facility. So the name Valley Forge for the spacecraft was not just picked out of the air. It was picked off of an aircraft carrier which must by now be deceased.

The carrier wasn't tied up at a pier. It was backed up to within fifteen feet of a jetty with a ramp going up to the fantail. The actors who played the Drones were taken up this ramp on wheelchairs to the center of the ship where there was an elevator.

The scenes with the actors were shot in thirty-seven days at the carrier and the airport hangar. Then seven months were spent doing the special effects.

Special effects are what have made Trumbull famous in the motion picture industry. He's in charge of the fx for the upcoming Steve Spielberg film CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND and a tight lid is being kept on what is being done, although the prestigious film magazine THE AMERICAN CINEMATOGRAPHER will be doing a mammoth spread on the film about the time of its release in May, 1977.

Trumbull is an acknowledged genius in the industry, but like many of his school, he is largely self taught, being a dynamo of pure raw talent. His only education in this field is a year and a half spent at El Camino Junior College taking a basic architectural course which involved some design studies and illustration. He became very interested in the art and dropped the architecture. He then dropped everything to do painting on his own. He quit school and took jobs with advertising agencies doing technical illustrations. He then worked for Graphic Films in Hollywood doing tight illustrations for animated promotional films for NASA and the Air Force in 1962 & 63 about the Apollo program.

One of these films, TO THE MOON AND BEYOND was seen by Stanley Kubrick at the 1964 World's Fair in New York City. After studying more of Trumbull's work he was hired as a special effects supervisor for "2001" and worked on the film for three years. His slit-scan effect brought about the publicity line "The Ultimate Trip". He later reused this process for the ABC logo.

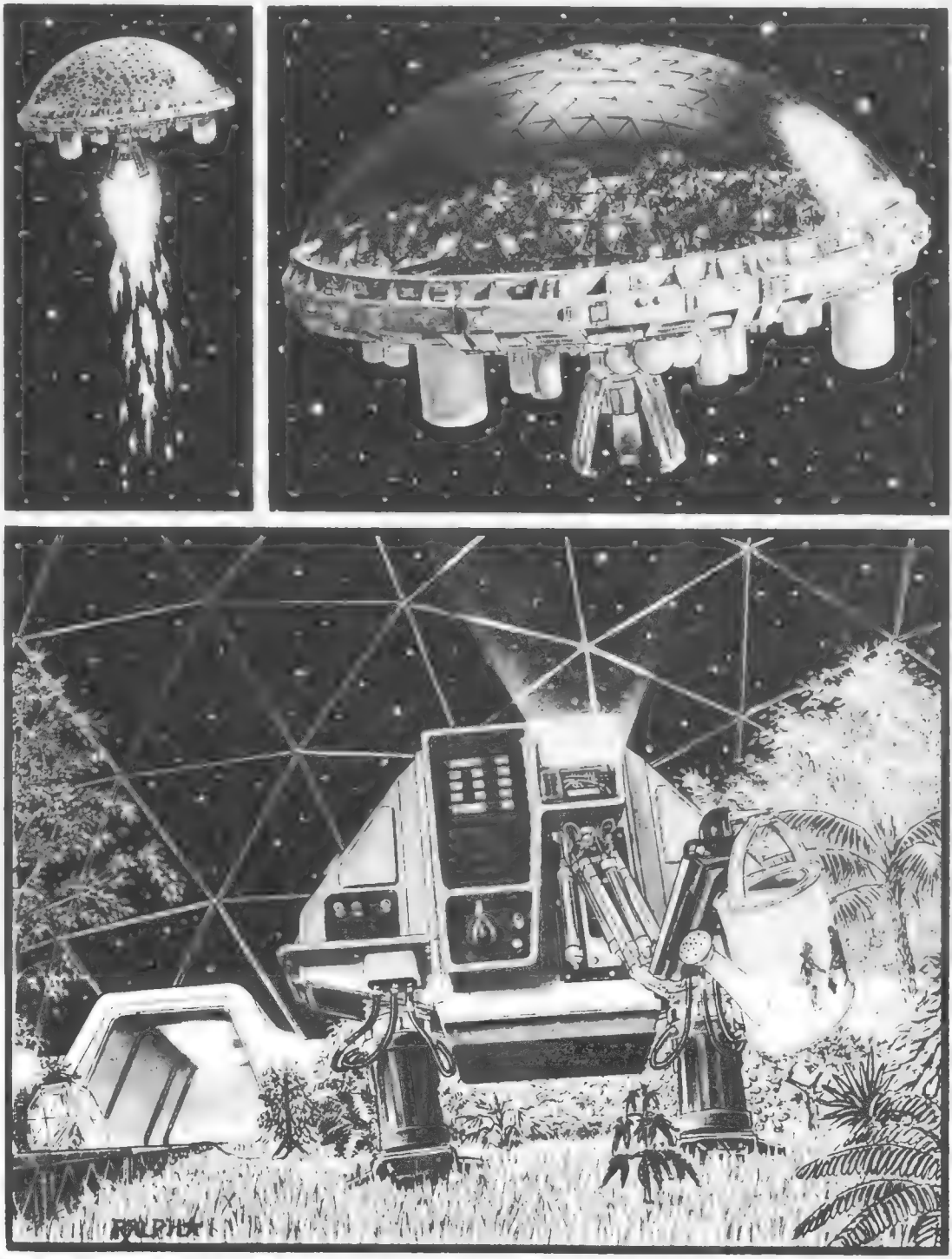
The model of the Valley Forge used in the film was twenty-six feet long and quite delicate. Moving it at all caused pieces to come off. It was roughly patterned on the Expo Tower at Osaka from the 1970 World's Fair. American Airlines wanted to make it a mobile display but it would have cost $30,000 to make it solid and sturdy enough plus would have cost $3,000 just to move it the twenty-five miles to Hollywood. The spine of the ship was a steel bar, and the core with the living quarters and control section was plywood with styrene plastic over it. All the exterior detailing came from six hundred and fifty German army tank model kits, mostly using the tiny hatches, doorways, etc. Much this same approach was used in contructing the miniatures in "2001".

The backgrounds for the domes, which included everything from the blackness of stellar space to the detonation of other domes, was accomplished by front projection. This is a detailed process in which the images are projected on a special retro-reflective screen made of thousands of glass beads. Only from the position of the light source and the camera can the image be seen, even though in the film it looks like the image is visible to the actors as well. It also involves throwing the image from the projector by using a mirror and is a complex setup requiring perfect arrangement.

SILENT RUNNING made good use not just of special effects, but of the photography in general. The opening scene of the extreme close-up of a snail moving over leaves is beautifully filmed and the background music sung by Joan Baez is equally beautiful, and perfectly evocative of the mood. When the camera moves from this scene, through other interiors, and then pulls back from a view port to reveal a fleet of space freighters amid a deafening blast of music from the soundtrack, it can't help but impress. What's good about this film is that Trumbull, as the director, is equally concerned with the live action as well as the photographic effects as he carefully balances them so that one works with the other in perfect harmony. In this way the film does not become a largely grandiose display of brilliant special effects which overshadow the presences of the actors which, as great as "2001" is, did happen there.

Although some criticized the presence of Joan Baez on the soundtrack, those songs were very important in creating mood and enhancing scenes. At that time, although not now, her presence was even considered a bit controversial as she was still connected with the anti-war protests. But with the passage of time proving her as well as others to have been correct, such criticism has faded, allowing the music to be examined in a more objective manner. Although it was not widely distributed, there was a soundtrack record of SILENT RUNNING, but it is rather difficult to find.

SILENT RUNNING set a high watermark for science fiction films and achieved quality comparable on very favorable levels to "2001". The film has definitely gathered a cult of followers and with its very quick sale to TV gathered even more admirers. Even if it didn't succeed well enough financially for Trumbull to do the cinerama SF film he later envisioned to follow, it did firmly establish his reputation in the minds of any who questioned his abilities, plus created a rare film to be both admired and enjoyed.


RALPH

CRITIQUE

10. Superb
9. Excellent
8. Very Good
7. Good
6. Fairly Good
5. Fair
4. Tolerable
3. Poor
2. Very Poor
1. Worthless

CRITIQUE is basicly a review column, but we will not specificly recommend that you buy or not buy a particular item. We will review each item to the best of our ability and let each reader take it from there. We will be reviewing almost any item (fanzines, prozines, records, portfolios, tapes, posters, or just anything of general interest) with one exception. We will not be doing any SFCA publications for obvious reasons. CRITIQUE offers a readership of nearly two thousand and CRITIQUE will also offer the publisher of any item we review up to one hundred words of free space to rebut his review, if he chooses to do so, providing his review is less than an "8" rating. All rebuttals to appear in the next column must be in our hands at least five days before the ad deadline of the next RB&CC or they will be run in the following issue. If you have an item you would like reviewed, send a copy of it to: CRITIQUE, 6351 S.W. 43 STREET, MIAMI, FLORIDA 33155

A few things to remember: Where UNDERGROUNDS are concerned, you must be 18 or older to order them. All fanzines reviewed are 8 1/2 x 11 with offset printing and wraparound binding unless otherwise noted. From time to time there may be a publication over which two of our reviewers have wide disagreement and in which case two reviews of the same book will be run in the interest of fairness.

A FINAL NOTE: The only reason for CRITIQUE is as a service to fandom. If you appreciate what we are trying to do then let us know. Your support can be shown in numerous ways: If you order an item because of our review then please mention CRITIQUE in your order, and of course the RB&CC would appreciate your subscription and advertising support. Naturally, your comments are welcomed.

JAMES VAN HISE / EDITOR

THE FRAZETTA TREASURY - $5.00 - 52 pages - No name or address given for the publisher.

This type of publication seems to be becoming quite prevalent within fandom these days. And I for one like it. This kind of collection/portfolio/whatnot magazine has a tight and cozy atmosphere, and it's a hell of a lot of fun regardless of the price. And for the collector who wants everything an artist has done short of an autographed ice cream spoon, these types of publications are essential.

The reason these "treasury" zines are becoming rather widespread isn't very hard to figure out. It seems to me, all you need do is contact an artist, talk him into doing an interview and letting you print some of his artwork, and it's a lead pipe cinch. An instantly bankable property. The hardest degree of work would come in compiling a nearly-complete checklist. These guys avoided some of the hard work for although this zine looks legit, it was not done with Frazetta's permission. Russ Cochran just revealed that in GRAPHIC GALLERY.

The concepts and the titles are the same as in THE BERNI WRIGHTSON TREASURY, as are the layouts, order of contents, etc. But there are differences; the typefaces are different, and it lists no publisher whereas the WRIGHTSON TREASURY does. Also, THE FRAZETTA TREASURY seems to lack a certain professional polish that THE WRIGHTSON TREASURY most definitely has.

Though one "Critique" reviewer expressed an apparent dislike for THE BERNI WRIGHTSON TREASURY, I liked it. I found its tasteful balance of published and unpublished art delightful, and I enjoyed the interview thoroughly. And I can easily say the same for THE FRAZETTA TREASURY. Both magazines also feature a complete strip by the artist, printed, I presume, from the original artwork. Unfortunately, the Williamson & Frazetta strip, titled "The Claws Of Death", which originally appeared in BILLY THE KID #3, can't begin to compare with the strips seen in Russ Cochran's UNTAMED LOVE. It's merely interesting.

Though THE FRAZETTA TREASURY, as a whole, is entertaining, I found certain inclusions especially interesting. The inside front cover, done in a western motif and previously unpublished, is a beautiful piece of work. Its combination of the rugged West and mature sexual overtones is virtually unique, and certainly visually exciting. The reprinting of artwork done expressly for book clubs, and hitherto unseen by the general public, was nice. Also interesting, and perhaps somewhat of a rarity, is Frazetta's first published painting, the cover for WILD BILL HICKOK #4.

RATING 7 / MARK BURBEY

THE NEAL ADAMS TREASURY - $5.00 - 60 pages - Published by Pure Imagination, 13970 Lamphere, Detroit, Mi. 48223

For awhile it seemed that the artzine was dead, for with the passing of such publications as HERITAGE, ANOMALY and the excellent one-shots like PHASE, the super-slick super-art zine was all but non existant. But then the Treasury-zine was born. THE WRIGHTSON TREASURY, THE FRAZETTA TREASURY, THE BODE' INDEX, THE BRUNNER MYSTIQUE and now THE NEAL ADAMS TREASURY.

Like the others mentioned, the format and approach is almost identical but it takes more than a fair amount of taste and discretion to publish one of these and pull it off completely and so far only the Bode' and Brunner volumes have shown the proper amount of talent and imagination needed to do it just right. Like the others THE NEAL ADAMS TREASURY has some brilliant material, but only some and too much which falls far short of that goal and just takes up space.

The front and back covers are flawless full color reproductions of Neal Adams Tarzan paintings and they rank among the finest pieces Adams has ever done. As far as the outside covers go, it is the handsomest of all the treasury-zines to date. Would that one did not have to venture much further.

The inside front cover, a finely detailed pencil illustration of Conan continues to fulfill the promises made by the fine covers. The full pager opposite the beginning of the interview is also very nice, but then disappointment reigns supreme.

The drawings which spot the interview are anywhere from fair to forgetable. The interview itself is likewise. Much of it is pure biographical information which could have just been listed on a page separately without wasting valuable interview time on. Subjects are not explored as completely as they should have been, espec- the "Green Lantern-Green Arrow" series.

Some of the drawings reproduced full page are merely rough pencil sketches which reproduce even rougher. There are several pieces of advertising work reprinted which is good but too much of it is too similar and not very interesting.

The centerspread of the double page illustration for "Flowers For Algernon" is a welcome sight as it's worth being seen again as I doubt many fans even knew it existed.

The five pages of full page drawings reprinted from HERITAGE are a disappointment as they are obviously reprinted from the magazine itself and come out too dark and it should have been the business of the editors to make sure it reproduced correctly. The fine fragile very detailed art comes out instead looking rough.

The index of Adams' work is good but it does contain some omissions as evidenced by a couple of the drawings in this volume which they label as previously unpublished but which is just not the case.

This volume does reprint some work by Adams which was probably generally unknown to most of his fans and is valuable for that. But too much of the art is just not very good and not truly representative of Adams and some of the other work isn't even reproduced well. The Treasury was a nice idea but needed more to make it a cohesive magazine as it contains too much unfinished and unrelated material which would only be of interest to a small number of his fans...the completists.

The zine as a whole just does not live up to what the title would suggest, that it should be a publication to be treasured. And for $5.00 that is just what it should be!

RATING 6 / JAMES VAN HISE

THE EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS LIBRARY OF ILLUSTRATION, VOL. 1 - $60.00 - 272 page (9 X 12) hardcover book - Published by Russ Cochran, 202 S. Main Street, West Plains, Missouri 65775

Now available after some delay is the first of Cochran's projected three volume edition celebrating the illustrations inspired by the works of Edgar Rice Burroughs. This will be a limited edition (2000 numbered copies), with each volume costing $60.

A total of $180 for three books (and purchasers commit themselves to take all three of the set) is a good bit of money. As usual with Russ Cochran's publications, however, the money is well spent. The concept itself is very welcome, and the quality of design and production is as fine as one could want. This is a very handsome book.

This first volume concentrates on the early illustrators, primarily J. Allen St. John, to whose memory the volume is dedicated. Also included are works by N. C. Wyeth, Frank Schoonover, and a few other lesser illustrators. All illustrations are printed from the originals with one exception: the historic first illustration of Tarzan as it appeared on the cover of ALL STORY magazine. There are numerous color plates, several foldouts, and a few title page illustrations are even printed with embossed gold leaf.

Illustrations are introduced with short comments by Cochran, and most have printed on the facing pages excerpts from the text at the point where the original appeared -- a nice touch.

Other text includes a biographical sketch and appreciation of J. Allen St. John by veteran collector Darrell C. Richardson, illustrated by two photographs of the famous artist.

This volume covers all St. John's work for Burroughs: the Tarzan series through TARZAN'S QUEST, the Mars series through SWORDS OF MARS, plus books from the Venus and Pellucidar series and some non-series books. Not every illustration from these books appears here because not all could be found; but there is sufficient coverage for all but the most demanding illustration fan.

The only shortcoming I could note about the book is that the sizes and media of the originals are not consistently noted -- a minor quibble indeed.

RATING 10 / J.B.CLIFFORD,JR.

ART & STORY #2 - $2.00 - 52 pages - Published by James D. Denney, 32692 Black Mountain Road, Tollhouse, California 93667

The age of the slick, professional fanzine has not escaped us. It remains, and its survival is due partially to James Denney's incredible ART & STORY. Nothing so creative and original has been seen since the demise of Jan Strnad's ANOMALY.

With this second issue, Denney widens the magazine's scope, and gives the reader the variety he all but expects. The first issue was excellent, but it seemed to lack the diversity achieved in this second issue.

The contents are broken down into three categories: fiction, graphic fiction, and features (articles).

The fictions, which I was greatly looking forward to and was enthused about even as I leafed through the magazine for the first time, was not as much to my liking as I'd hoped.

MINISTERING ANGELS by C.S. Lewis is an SF short story which could have been a lot better that it was. The concept lent itself to the makings of an interesting story, in fact, it begged to be used properly, but I found Mr. Lewis' execution of the tale to be cumbersome.

The plot involves a crew of men, trained in their respective fields (most of them are anyway), who have been stationed on Mars. A spaceship lands 150 yards away from their largest window, and the men think they're being relieved six months early. But the truth of the matter is that they're being brought a couple of gifts intended to make their tenure on Mars a little easier to cope with. What the gifts amount to are two prostitutes, one thin and ugly, and annoyingly intellectual, the other fat and ugly, and rather pathetic. The bearers of these gifts present them as an attempt to unload them more than anything else.

Now, the plot I liked. It's an SF story that deals with personalities rather than technicalities. But I didn't like the way the story read. There were times when you didn't know what the immediate surroundings were, and there were others when the cockney English spoken by some of the characters (and written in the strictest vernacular) got so thick it became incomprehensible.

I must mention, though, that the story's layout and accompanying drawings by James Denney are so damned classy you feel special just reading it.

The brand new SF story by Alan Dean Foster is not much better. "Swamp Planet Christmas" is another interestingly conceived story gone awry. The format Mr. Foster chose makes for an incredibly choppy story that flows about as well as a frozen river. There is entirely no room for adequate characterization, and the conclusion it leads up to isn't worth the trouble. I've tried reading Alan Dean Foster's work before. I was able to get up to page 63 in his book MIDWORLD before I finally gave up on it. It was interesting, as is this story, but his writing is just so damned tedious that all possible enjoyment is sucked away through confusion and boredom.

Again, the graphics with this story are excellent, as are the fine illustrations by Clyde Caldwell.

The other fictional piece in ART & STORY #2 is the continued serialization of Frank L. Baum's "The Enchanted Isle Of Yew". As I said in my review of ART & STORY #1 (in RBCC #127), I just don't like fairy tales about princesses and such. I'll be glad when this wraps up, as it will make some space for something a little more interesting.

The graphic fiction is the second part of James Denney's SF strip, "The Black Star". This strip is a superb effort to make expert use of comics as a story

telling medium. The art is refreshingly different, and the story is wonderfully creative. There are certain points which have yet to be clarified, but such is to be endured with a continuing strip.

The articles; "Arthur C. Clarke - Some Exhilerating Prospects for the Future" by Oliver Whot, and "Space: 1999 - The Metamorph and The Metamorphoses" by James Denney, are both expertly written pieces. Both authors certainly did their homework. The Clarke article is especially interesting as it discusses the SST, the wristwatch telephone, 3-D television, the space shuttle and etc. Mr. Clarke's newest novel, IMPERIAL EARTH, is also reviewed.

Though I may have found a few minor things in ART & STORY #2 not quite to my liking, I can't emphasize enough how excellent this magazine truly is. It is the intellectual fan's dream magazine, and it offers truly different and unique reading, going beyond GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE's boring preoccupation with has-been comic artists and cover repros.

RATING 10 / MARK BURBEY

DARK PHANTASMS #1 - $3.50 - 48 pages - Published by Bill Whitcomb, 1515 Argonne Road, Tallahassee, Fla. 32303

The age of the slick fanzine may still be here but so, unfortunately, is the crudzine. Although most people think of a crudzine as something cheaply printed with sloppiness a byword in layouts and typing, such is not always the case. Some try to mask their identity under the guise of the expensively printed slickzine. But as slick as a zine may be, the printing and layouts can never hope to rise above the content itself. DARK PHANTASMS is the most perfect example of this I have ever seen.

The magazine has flawless printing on very heavy, expensive paper. But that's it. Outside of one decent feature the entire product is an absurd waste of both talent and money.

The front and back covers are sketches by Roy Krenkel. They're not bad but are the type of things by him which have literally seen print hundreds of times before. Not bad but nothing new.

The only other decent pieces of art are by Steve Fabian and they are two full page drawings which illustrate a reprint of a Robert E. Howard story "The Black Hound Of Death". These two Fabian drawings are the only really nice pieces of art in the issue and make the rest of the art look as bad as it really is.

The artwork by Bill Black, Rick Hoberg, Wes Smith and Steve Vance is all poor in the extreme. Most of it turns up in two comic strips, one twenty pages long and the other six pages long.

The first strip, "In The Lair Of Ysisl" is a comic strip adaptation of a sword & sorcery story by Karl Edward Wagner. I don't know how good the story was originally but in the adaptation it reads poorly and has some of the most amateurish illustration I have ever had the misfortune of seeing in a comic strip. It is very crudely drawn, with poor panel breakdowns and composition.

The second strip, "Arbada-Fetex" shows a much superior understanding of the comic strip and composition but still falls down on the actual artwork itself as it is still rather crude and unrefined (but still much better than the art on the other strip).

Many full page drawings by Bill Black (mostly crude swipes) abound.

For the number of people listed on the staff in editorial capacities, I am amazed so much of the work in here was allowed to see print without something better being sought out.

For some strange reason the zine's editorial claims that theirs is the only zine where you'll see original comic strips nowadays. Somehow I think that Don Rosa, Kerry Gammill, R.C. Harvey and Ron Wilber will be rather surprised to hear that since they've been contributing original strips to the RBCC for the past year. Somehow DARK PHANTASMS strikes me as being a bit out of touch with the rest of fandom and what has been accomplished there...as well as what is expected in a zine.

RATING 2 / JAMES VAN HISE

FLASHBACK GOLDEN AGE COMIC REPRINTS: FLASH COMICS #15, IBIS THE INVINCIBLE #1 - $3.00 each 68 pages, 7 1/2 X 10 1/2 - Published by Funnies Publishing Co., Inc., 1212 Second Ave., Rapids City, Ill. 61278

After a long break these facsimile reprints of choice Golden Age comics are back in production again. Each has the cover in full color, flawlessly reproduced from the original comic. The interiors are in black and white and are fine halftone reproductions which insure that detail work is not lost.

The FLASH COMICS #15 is a good early issue which cover features Hawkman which was always the best strip in the book (since the artist swiped freely from Foster and Raymond). This comic originally appeared in 1941.

IBIS #1 has the origin plus new adventures of this magician who was born in ancient Egypt but fights crime in the 20th century. It's a Fawcett comic, originally published in 1942, and sports an attractive cover and as usual better interior art than did D.C. comics in the forties.

With the inflated and absurd prices commanded for Golden Age comics nowadays, these reprints more than ably satisfy ones curiosity about the comics of that period.

RATING 9 / JAMES VAN HISE

MEDIASCENE #20 - $3.50, subs 6/$7.50 - 36 pages, tabloid on quality paper - Published by Supergraphics, Box 445, Wyomissing, Pa. 19610

When MEDIASCENE first appeared fandom was very excited as it would be the first zine published by a pro since WITZEND. We all expected another WITZEND. It wasn't since it was primarily a news & article zine but it needed time to grow. Well, it's been four years now and it hasn't grown nor has it even begun to realize the potential a publication produced by a professional of Steranko's calibre should. Instead of a prozine we have a zine with seven pages of news, seven pages of articles, four pages of full page artwork (three of them reprints from other sources) and fifteen and one-half pages of ads!!! This is the great prozine MEDIASCENE??? What happened?

What happened is that Steranko has proven that he really doesn't have the imagination to produce something like this. Where WITZEND was fascinating, MEDIASCENE is dull, with only occasional flashes of insight.

Although the price above reads $3.50, it is possible to obtain it for less from other dealers as Steranko jacks up the price on a current issue making it a back issue (thus a current issue is really a back issue and subscriptions begin with the next issue not the current back issue). The cover price on a single copy is generally $1.50 from dealers or less if you subscribe from Supergraphics.

Also, for a newszine it often tends to run a little late, thus dating most of the news.

The front cover on this one is a previously unpublished Tarzan drawing by Neal Adams pleasingly printed in 4 colors.

The front of section two is a black and white drawing by Barry Smith which is available from Smith's publishing outfit as a poster. The centerspread of section one is a full color montage/reprint of various S&S paintings which Steranko has done over the past few years. It does have excellent color repro.

The articles include one on Robert E. Howard which is actually a reprint from the new hardcover THE LAST CELT, a 3 pager on sword & sorcery in films (which says too little about too much), and one full page on Tolkien. Not a whole lot to get worked up about.

Steranko has missed the boat. He's made MEDIASCENE into a catalog disguised as a newszine/fanzine and almost fifty percent of it is just ads for the items which he is selling. He also accepts money for things he hasn't published yet but will some day...

How sad. How very sad.

Steranko has the ability and the contacts to go beyond WITZEND, but he simply lacks the imagination, not to mention the ambition. We all remember the failed promise of TALON, and how we all looked forward to it...what was it, six years ago now?

MEDIASCENE has merely become average, typical, when it should have become great and exciting. It has had moments of real inspiration, but unfortunately that's all they were...moments.

RATING 5 / JAMES VAN HISE

MEDIA SPOTLIGHT #2 - $1.25 - 52 pages - Published by Irjax Enterprises, Inc., 13016 St. Charles Place, Rockville, Md. 20853

When I reviewed the first issue of this travesty in RBCC 128 (and ran the same review in ENTERPRISE INCIDENTS #2) I sent him copies of both publications so that these people could see that I wasn't just talking through my hat when I said it could be a lot better. I wanted them to see what I meant and that I knew what I was talking about. Apparently some people never learn.

Not only have they somehow by some warped miracle managed to obtain nationwide distribution, but this second issue is even worse than the first! All of the mistakes have been repeated and even enlarged upon. It is now even more of a crudzine and its staffers look even more like hopeless amateurs than they did in the first issue!

Picture if you will a newsstand magazine which was typed up on your common ordinary typewriter, pasted up same size as printed size with black lines drawn down the page to separate the columns. Add to this bad articles and terminally unimaginative editing and you've only just begun!

The front cover is in full color and at first glance on the book rack looks good, but only at first glance. Upon picking it up we see that it is a shoddily colored in black and white still. Arrgghh!!

To expand the interest (and to try and make it look less like the Star Trek ripoff zine it is) they've added a column on, so help me, rock music!

Although it is not listed on the contents page (perhaps they were justifiably ashamed) the final feature is that awful three page Howard the Duck interview by Doug Fratz reprinted from THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF MARVEL #1 and which I kicked around in that review last issue.

There's even an article on LOGAN'S RUN (four pages of various stills).

An article with the sensationalistic title, "Porno In Star Trek" is actually about the Star Trek fan fiction written by frustrated femmes who dream of seducing Kirk or Spock and write stories completely changing the personalities of these characters to suit their own fantasies. The article is a bit better then most of the others but plays cutesy games with the accompanying pictures (putting black rectangles over the eyes) which is rather absurd since the photos used are average Star Trek publicity stills.

This zine is such a quick dish slapped together zine done to invade the newsstands and turn a quick buck.

STAR LOG has shown what a magazine aimed at ST fans can be when talented people are involved. MEDIA SPOTLIGHT shows what a magazine becomes when no one on the staff knows what they're doing.

Abomination thy name is spelled MEDIA SPOTLIGHT.

RATING 1 / JAMES VAN HISE

RICHARD CORBEN'S FUNNY BOOK - $10.95 - 140 pages - Published by Nickelodeon Press, 1131 White, Kansas City, Mo. 64126

This book was announced sometime back but only finally appeared in September. It is a hardcover collection (with a brand new full color dust jacket by Corben) which reprints fourteen of Corben's comic strips from the undergrounds. Two of the strips are printed in full color. The first, "Lame Lem's Love", was originally published in black and white but has had color added to it by Herb Arnold (and it is a superb job as the color is just as unique as the kind Corben himself does). The other is the second strip about the character Den who appeared first in the strip in GRIM WIT #2 in full color (although that strip appears here in black and white). This sequel to that (although not a concluding sequel) appears in full color and was first published in a European fanzine in full color (and I must admit that the color in that European zine is a mite better than the repro on it in this book. That is not to say that the repro here is bad, it's just that the foreign version is slightly sharper). There are also more of these "Den" sequels but this book only publishes the one.

As good as this book is, one will find that the reproduction is often not as good here as it was in the original appearance of certain of the stories (most notably "The Beast Of Wolfton" which actually seems to have been reproduced from the underground rather than the original art. This also holds true for the strip "Den" from GRIM WIT #2 as it is printed in black and white although is apparently reproduced from the color printing of it, with often unsatisfactory results.

Still, it's a nice book and worth having.

RATING 8 / JAMES VAN HISE

GRAPHIC GALLERY #9 - $4.00 ($5.00 first class) - 72 pages - Published by Russ Cochran, Box 437, W. Plains, Mo. 65775

This was the first of this type of publication and is still the best. Artwork offered is by the likes of Corben, Foster and full color by George Barr. Also Raymond and other comic strip greats. Can be appreciated if you want it to buy art (order your copy of #10 now if that's the case) or just to admire all the fine art flawlessly reproduced. It's for the art fan. This one even includes the first Flash Gordon page by Raymond which the syndicate rejected before it bought the strip. Super rare!

RATING 9 / JAMES VAN HISE

CYCLOPS #1 - $3.00 - 250 pages (2 3/4" X 4 1/8") - Published by COTN Pub. Co., Box 8187, Prairie Village, Kansas 66208

This would be one fine zine if it wasn't so damned small (read that tiny). It'll fit in your shirt pocket! It's a fantasy filmzine with articles on Kong, SPACE: 1999, "Fantastic Planet", Vincent Price and more. It has interviews, behind the scenes photos, fine stills, fanzine reviews and good articles. Different parts are printed in different colored inks on different colored paper but with nice results. It is often very good and in some spots even great. It deserves a much better format as the tiny size with the grown-up fanzine price puts people off, but honest it is good. Now if only the editors would give it the proper format it would be right up there with the filmzines that are easier to read and appreciate, like FANTASCENE, etc.

RATING 8 / JAMES VAN HISE

ARTIST PROFILE

Mike Zeck

Although Mike's first RBCC cover was for #109, under G.B. Love's editorship, his work has become more closely identified with the new RBCC due to the many other fine covers he has done for it over the past two years.

Today, at age 27, Mike has only been in fandom since 1970. But his love of comics and desire to be a comic book illustrator goes back to the sixth grade, when he first began drawing.

Mike's first published professional work appeared as the inside front cover of SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #2 (which was a fair reproduction of the same Conan drawing which had graced the cover of RBCC #109).

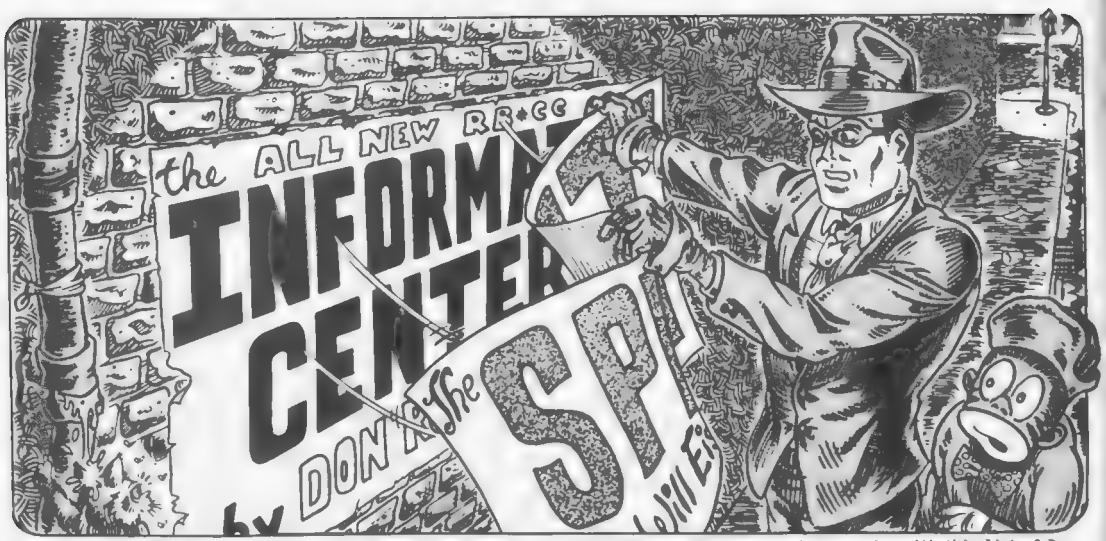
The lion's share of Mike's professional credits lie with the recently departed Charlton Comics Group where his work in the form of strips, covers and text illustrations appeared in no less than thirty issues of various titles. His first published Charlton work was text illustrations in BARNEY & BETTY RUBBLE #11. The first strip by him they published was "Only A Toy" in SCARY TALES #2, although the first strip he actually drew for them was "That Old Gang of Mine" which didn't appear until several months later.

He has most recently completed a five page strip featuring The Destroyer for Marvel, although it may not appear until next summer, in one of the annuals.

On the fan scene, besides his covers for RBCC, Mike has also drawn an eight page strip from a script by Bill Pearson for WITZEND titled "The Avenging Dodo". It's done in very detailed inks & wash and is Mike's finest comic strip work to date. It should be published very soon so watch for it!

The self-portrait by Mike at the right was done for the Miamicon program book last year.

The inside front cover of this RBCC is the original line drawing, before wash was added, of RBCC #119's back cover.



A return from the dead.

What now? Am I destroying my credibility even more than some of my answers used to? No, as I'd said, I did finally burn myself out on doing an Information Center with such a 'vengeance" as I had been...typing it all up, clipping it, 'pasting" it up, doing illustrations, sticking them in straight, drawing letter borders, answering all the mail, driving myself frazzled. I think I was simply looking for an excuse to take a vacation and do something else ("The Pertwillaby Papers"), and my heavy losses on Omnicon seemed like a ready-made reason for a cop-out. Since dropping I.C. for two issues, I've received suicide threats from half my readership, so I wrote back and told the guy that I'd press on with I.C. on a different basis: all I'm gonna' do now is write it. Some other poor fool in Florida is gonna' hafta' sit and type all these silly remarks up and lay it out...and whoever that is has my gratitude and-slash-or pity! Needless to say, there will be no more illustrations while my comic strip is running, and I'm gonna' hafta' be somewhat more selective in answering queries-maybe answering some in this issue or saving others to balance out the space or boredom limitations in that issue. But basically, though I.C. will seem different to the eye, the I.C. text should remain the same in essence.

Before I get into the I.C., I'd like to apologize for going from one extreme to another - as I'd said, I used to answer all my mail, but lately I've been ignoring correspondence shamefully! If you've written me in the past month or so and precipitated no response - sorry! Give me a lil' while to get back inna' swing. OK?

And now...into the maelstrom...

DON ROSA

Jack Seabrook and Don Rex sent in indexes of MIKE KALUTA'S work in answer to a query:

COMICS:
KORAK #46-56, SECRETS OF SINISTER HOUSE #6,7,11, HOUSE OF SECRETS #87,98,99,101,102, HOUSE OF MYSTERY #185,195,200,202, 210,212,221, DARK MANSION #7-13, WEIRD MYSTERY #1, GHOSTS #7, [illegible] SORCERY #1, ADVENTURE #425, STAR SPANGLED WAR #167, [illegible] #23-26, WEIRD WORLDS #4-6,10, [illegible] #431, SHADOW #1-4,6, [illegible] MYSTERY #7

BLACK & WHITES:
WEB OF HORROR #2,3, BLAST #1, [illegible] #24, PSYCHO #13, NIGHTMARE #6, SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #3,14, UNKNOWN WORLDS OF SCIENCE FICTION #1,2,5

POSTERS:
The Sacrifice (Conan), Dante's Inferno (8 color plates), Siren's Canyon, Abyss Poster, Demons

HARD COVER BOOKS:
LOST VALLEY OF ISKANDER (R.E.H.), SHUDDER PULPS

'UNDERGROUNDS":
GOTHIC BLIMP WORKS #6,7

FANZINES:
AMAZING WORLD OF D.C. #1,2,6, THIS IS LEGEND #1, ABYSS #1, COLOUR YOUR DREAMS, COMIX & FANDOM #1, MCR #4, REALM #5, SPA FON #4, PHASE #1, SQUA TRONT #4, GRAPHIC SHOWCASE #1-3, RBCC #72, HEMOGOBLIN #1, RIVERCON PROGRAM BOOK '75, I'LL BE DAMNED #1, SCREAM DOOR #1, INFINITY #3-5, REALITY #1, 2, HERITAGE #1a, IMAGINATION #1

Jack Seabrook answers another question with this list of Don Newton's pro work:
MIDNIGHT TALES #11-14, GHOST MANOR #18,19, HAUNTED #21,22, MANY GHOSTS OF DR. GRAVES #45,47, PHANTOM #67-71, 73-76

And...Kingsley Kelley and Don Rex send in this Walt Simonson list for another questioner:

COMICS:
DETECTIVE #437-444, SWORD OF SORCERY #4,5, HERCULES UNBOUND #7, 8-11, WEIRD WAR #10, METAL MEN #45-on, FIRST ISSUE SPECIAL #9, SHERLOCK HOLMES #1, SCORPION #2, STAR SPANGLED WAR #180, MASTER OF KUNG FU #24

BLACK & WHITES:
CREEPY #76, SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #7,8,12,13, HAUNT OF HORROR digest #2,3, THRILLING ADV. STORIES #2, HAUNT OF HORROR mag #1, NATLAMP VERY LARGE BOOK OF COMICAL FUNNIES

FANZINES:
ABRAXAS #1, OUTWORLDS #20, ACBA SKETCHBOOK '75, STAR*REACH #1, R.E.H.:LONE STAR FICTIONEER #3,4, CHARLTON BULLSEYE #4, COLOUR YOUR DREAMS, WSFA #65,70, GREY GOD PASSES, WSFA '69 Data Sheet, '72 & '73 Disclaves, HORIZONS #1 (Spanish), METRO CON 73

An omission on my Lil' Abner comic-book index: Abner also appeared in SPARKLE COMICS #1-33 and SPARKLER COMICS #57-83.

Garth Whetzel mentions some Marvel Robert E. Howard adaptations that I missed in my index of same:
CHAMBER OF CHILLS #2: "Horror From The Mound".
CHAMBER OF CHILLS #3: "The Thing On The Roof".
MARVEL PREMIERE #33: "Red Shadows".

And in answer to yet another old query, Jack Seabrook and Richard Fifield (sic?) sent in a list of the comics that the "Power Records" editions reprinted.
SPIDER-MAN #124, WEREWOLF BY NIGHT #1, HULK #171, FANTASTIC FOUR #1, CAPT. AMERICA #143, 168, FRANKENSTEIN #1, 2, DRACULA #19, MAN-THING #5,6

Finally, allow me to give much deserved plugs to a few items. First Jerry Bails has the corner on the comic-art reference works! There's the "Collector's Guide To The First Heroic Age" ($5.75); "Who's Who Of American Comic Books" vol. 1:A-F ($5.75), vol.2:G-M ($7.75), vol. 3:N-S ($6.75), vol. 4:T-Z ($6.75); and "Howard Keltner's Index To Golden Age Comic Books" (covering the contents of over 180 titles) $4.75. These mind-boggling books are available from Jerry Bails, 487 Lakewood Blvd, Detroit, Mich. 48215

And watch the adzines for news of Jim Vadeboncoeur's new magazine "PROBE" which will feature in-depth articles and indexes on the great comics of the 1950's, with particular emphasis on Atlas, Dell, and like that.

Oh yeah...4 issues ago I mentioned that I was looking forward to "New Millenium's Eve" on Dec. 31, 1999. Several people wrote in to inform me that, fool that I am, the new millenium begins on Jan. 1, 2001 not 2000! I'm certainly glad I didn't hafta' wait a quarter of a century to find that out! ("New Millenium's Eve" is Dec. 31, 2000.)

COMIC BOOK HALL of FAME

Nelson Corey nominates UNCLE SCROOGE #25 ("Flying Dutchman") and PLASTIC MAN #19 ("Prehistoric Plunderer").

Lee Lankford chooses CAPT. AMERICA #110 & X-MEN #51,57-61

Jack Seabrook's all-time favorites are UNCLE SCROOGE #15 and DONALD DUCK #67.

Mark Burbey names CONAN #24 and SWAMP THING #4 & 10.

Mike Valerio picks a favorite: GREEN LANTERN #76

Daniel Dennis likes Ducks, as do I: DONALD DUCK 4-Color #189 ("Castle's Secret"), 408 ("Golden Helmet") and 223 ("Lost In The Andes")

Ron Gomes has more than his share of loved ones: SPIDER-MAN #50, DR. STRANGE #10-13, TOMB OF DRACULA #44-DR. STRANGE #14, MAN-THING #9,10 and GIANT-SIZE AVENGERS #4.

John D'Amanda picks SUPERMAN #300 ("Superman:2001") and DETECTIVE #457 ("There Is No Hope In Crime Alley"). That latter one is alright is you can accept them readjusting the killing of Bruce Wayne's parents to 1955, about 30 years after it originally was said to have occured. But I guess times change...or rather they can't for a comic character.

John D'Amanda --

WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF GREEN, RED, BLUE, GOLD, AND WHITE KRYPTONITE ON SUPERMAN???

I wish they hadn't gotten rid of Kryptonite! Well, green Kryptonite was great stuff...and an occasional chunk of red K was interesting if it wasn't too silly...but the blue and white and plaid and polka dot and all that other kryptonite was a bit much!

Anyway, I'm sure you know how Green K's radiation can weaken and eventually fatally poison the blood of a native Kryptonian. Red K causes weird effects or transformations on Kryptonians depending on how wild or silly a D.C. writer's imagination happens to be. Gold K permanently removes the super-powers of any Kryptonian exposed to it. Blue K is "Bizarro" Kryptonite which does its thing only on Bizarros. White K doesn't make a bit of sense to me...for some reason it destroys all plant life! Then there's jewel Kryptonite (From Krypton's Jewell Mountains) which Phantom Zoners can use to magnify their brain waves for foul purposes. Remember Silver K? The stuff that didn't exist? (Jimmy Olsen used some fake silver K on Superman's 25th Silver Anniversary). Then there's those hybrids that pop up now and then: Green/red K, Red/Gold K, etc.

MARK BURBEY--MIAMI, FLORIDA

EXACTLY WHAT WAS THE STAR THAT APPEARED ON MANY COMICS IN THE 1950'S EVEN "PRECODE" E.C.'S THAT READ "CONFORMS TO THE COMICS CODE"???

Apparently that was an early effort to squelch public outcry against those awful ol' comic books. Around 1950 the comic publishers attempted to form a self-regulating censorship board much like the "Comics Code Authority" of 1955 on. The Association Of Comics Magazine publishers" was directed by Henry Schultz and had as its board: Bill Gaines (EC), Leverett Gleason (Lev Gleason), Harold Moore (Famous Funnies), Rae Herman (Orbit) plus Irving Manheimer and Frank Armer (distributors). For a time E.C.s, Lev Gleasons, Famous Funnies & Orbit comics had that seal on the cover and a "Dell Pledge To Parents" type deal on the inside front cover.

GARTH WHETZEL--SHARON, PENN.

WHEN DID KRYPTO THE SUPERDOG FIRST MAKE HIS APPEARANCE IN EACH OF THE COMICS FEATURING SUPERMAN & SUPERBOY???

I don't have the patience to search through ACTION, SUPERMAN and SUPERBOY for the first appearances of good ol' Krypto (maybe someone else?) but I can say that Krypto's very first appearance and origin was in ADVENTURE #210, March 1955.

VERSTREET LISTS THE "WANDER" STRIP AS APPEARING IN "CHEYENNE KID" #66-87. IS THIS CORRECT?

Nope. Wander, the Cowboy from outer space, didn't appear in all those issues in that range. However, since I didn't find out about Wander until a few years ago, and since dealers seldom bother to stock such an "inexpensive" item, I'm afraid I only have a few issues myself. All I can say is that he was in #67-69, 81, 82 & 87.

CAN YOU TELL ME ANYTHING ABOUT JAY DISBROW???

Jayson Disbrow was an artist on horror comics of the early '50's who had a dark, moody sort of style that seemed like a bad cross between Al Feldstein and Alex Raymond. He worked for A.C.G. in the early 50s and Star/Novelty in 1952-53...and I think he did a few old CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED's, no?

NEIL RENTON--PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

A FEW MONTHS BACK STAN LEE AND JACK KIRBY APPEARED IN THE FLESH (OR RATHER, THE PAPER) IN AN ISSUE OF X-MEN. I SAW THEM AT REED & SUE RICHARD'S WEDDING. WHERE ELSE HAVE THEY APPEARED IN COMICS???

Most recently they've popped up (along with the whole Marvel "Bullpen") in the good old-fashioned nonsense in Fantastic 4 #176. They've made other appearances in the earlier years of Marvel...maybe someone out there has been keeping track(?).

WHAT COMICS HAS HARLAN ELLISON WRITTEN & PLOTTED?

Golly Moses, I don't have a list! I remember a few Avengers, several Hulks, a Batman, some Warren magazines... and away back in 1954 he scripted a story "Upheavel" for an E.C. comic (?#?) Anyone keeping a list?

RICHARD FIFIELD (sic?)--?

CAN YOU GIVE ME ANY INFO ON A GIL KANE UNDERGROUND CALLED "MY NAME IS SAVAGE"???

It wasn't an "underground"...it was a 35¢ black & white magazine one-shot in June, 1968, and the proper title was "His name is...Savage". Intended as a bimonthly from Adventure House Press, "...Savage" was editor-in-chiefed by Gil Kane and managing-editored by Larry Koster. The strip, written by Kane & Robert Franklin and drawn by Kane, was a very violent tale of a man's-sweat detective (a Mike Hammer type) meeting a super-villain type. Lotsa' machine-set text. One absurd rumor was that the magazing was sued out of business by Lee Marvin because the cover featured a painting of "Savage" (?) which was quite obviously Marvin. Whatever the reason for it being a one-shot, about 6 or 7 full issues were completed...I've seen Kane selling the pages at conventions.

WHAT SUPERHERO TITLES DID MLJ PUBLISH IN THE 40's???

Remember now that all anyone has to do is send me a magazine-sized SASE and I'll send them FREE a full detailed MLJ and Nedor comic index. But in the meantime: MLJ's superhero titles consisted of Blue Ribbon #1-22 (Nov.'39-March '42) Top-Notch #1-27, Top-Notch Laugh #28-44 (Dec. '39-May '44) Pep #1-65 (Jan. '40-Jan. '48) Zip #1-47 (Feb. '40-Summer '44) Jackpot #1-9 (Spring '41-Spring '43) Special #1, Hangman #2-8, Black Hood #9-19 (Winter '42-Summer '46) (Laugh #20-date), Shield-Wizard #1-13 (Summer '40-Spring '44).

The MLJ heroes were these:

Shield: Pep #1-65, Shield-Wizard #1-13, Black Hood: Top-Notch #9-44, Black Hood #9-19, Jackpot #1-9, Pep #49-51, 59, 60. Steel Sterling: Zip #1-47, Jackpot #1-9. Hangman: Pep #17-47, Special/Black Hood/Hangman #1-9. Wizard: Top-Notch #1-27, Shield-Wizard #1-13.Mr Justice: Blue Ribbon #9-22, Jackpot #1-9. Bob Phantom: Blue Ribbon #2,3, Top-Notch #3-25. Boy Buddies: Special/Black Hood/Hangman #1-9, 11. Captain Commando: Pep #30-52, 54, 56. The Web: Zip #28-38. Dusty: Shield/Wizard#5-12, Black Hood #10. Comet: Pep #1-16. Black Jack: Zip #20-35 . Scarlet Avenger: Zip #1-17. The Fox: Blue Ribbon #16-22. Press Guardian: Zip #1-11. Captain Flag: Blue Ribbon #16-22. Fireball: Pep #12-20. Mr. Satan: Zip #1-9. Red Rube: Zip #39-47. Inferno: Blue Ribbon #13-19. Roy the Wonder Boy: Shield-Wizard #8, 10-13. Zambini: Zip #1-35. Madame Satan: Pep #16-21. Kardak: Top-Notch #1,2,4-29.

NELSON COREY--WAYMART, PENNSYLVANIA

COULD YOU GIVE ME A LIST OF BOB OKSNER'S COMIC BOOK WORK???

Robert Oksner did some syndicated strips like "Miss Cairo Jones ('45-'47), " I Love Lucy" (as "Bob Lawrence","53-'55), "Soozie" ('67-'68), "Donci" ('67+). Also Bob did Plastic Man ads for Union Carbide ('70), comic supplements in movie magazines ('70). Marvel (1939-44): Terry Vance, Marvel Boy, Destroyer, Breezy & His Glider Patrol, Secret Stamp. Hillman (1941): Mach Duff; ('48) Western. Harvey (1941): Speed Taylor. Pines (1943-48): Pepper Swift, Brad Spencer/Wonderwoman, Commando Cubs, Lance Lewis. Mekano, Trouble-Shooter, Jack Manning, Sandy of the Circus, Black Terror, Bart Bradlen, Mis Masque. Parents (early '40's): "True Comics" A.C.G. (1942-45): ?. D.C. (1946-date); as inker, Green Lantern, Justice Society, Ghost Patrol, Flash, Balck Canary, Supergirl, Superman, Jimmy Olsen, Hawkman, "Plot", as penciller & inker: Binky, Bob Hope, Jerry Lewis, Pat Boone, Sgt. Bilko, Dobie Gillis, Miss Beverly Hills, Melody Lane, Mary Marvel, (SF), Capt. Marvel, (mystery), Supergirl, April O'Day, (love), Angel & Ape, Plasticman.

WHAT ISSUES OF CHARLTON'S DAVID CASSIDY HAD ART BY SU GUMEN???

I don't know which. Don't have any. I know Su assists Alfred Andriola on "Kerry Drake."

WHAT ISSUES OF POLICE COMICS ARE SUPER/I.S.'s PLASTIC MAN ISSUES REPRINTS OF???

Super's Plastic Man #11, reprinted (in it's entirety, minus ads) Quality's original Plas #16. Super's #16, reprinted the original #21. Super's #18 apparently reprinted an entire issue of Police Comics...but my Police collection is less complete (actually virtually non-existant).

HOW ABOUT A DETECTIVE COMICS CHARACTER INDEX???
Wow! I'll list them in order of the first to appear. Ready?..

Slam Bradley: #1-15?
Spy #1-8, 10,77,8?-83
Speed Saunders: #1,3-58
Cosmo the Phantom of [illegible]: #1-20, 22-37.
Bruce Nelson: #?-36.
Buck Marshall: #?-6,7-11,
14-16,20,21,23-25, 27,28, 30-34.
Bret Lawton: #1,?
Mr. Chang: #2,4,6.
Hope Hazard: #3
Larry Steele: #5-26, 29-[illegible]
43-63.
Fu Manchu: #17-27
Steve Malone: #?,?,?1,?6,?8,34-42,
44-59.
Crimson Avenger: #[illegible],27-29,37-89.
Inspector [illegible] #??
Batman: #?1-37, #?4-date
Batman & Robin: #?6-?9
Plain Clothes Pete: #27
Red Logan: #35,38-43
Tiff Crosby: #37-63
Air Wave: #60-137
Boy Commandos: #64-150
Super-Sleuth McFooey: #80
3 Ring Binks: #84-109, 111,
115-117, 121, 128, 132, 134.
Robotman: #138-154, 156-207
Pow Wow Smith: #151-202
Casebook Mystery: #152, 169
Impossible But True: #153-200
Roy Raymond, TV Detective:
#201-292.
Galloping Ghost: #157
Mysto, Magician Detective: #203-
212.
John Jones, Manhunter from Mars:
#224-326.
Aquaman: #293-300.
Elongated Man: #327-383,426,430,
436,444,449,453,456,457,462,465.
Batgirl: #384,385,388,389,392,
393,396,397,399-401,404-424.
Jason Bard: #425,427,429,431,433,435?
Hawkman: #428,434,446,452,454,455.
Robin: #386,390,391,394.395,398-403,495,447,450.451.
The Atom: #432,463
Manhunter: #437-443
Man-Bat: #458 459
Tim Trench: #460. 461.
Black Canary: #464.
WHEW!!!

JIM CRAWFORD--CINCINNATI, OHIO
HOW MANY SHADOW PULPS WERE PUBLISHED? WHAT WERE THE TITLES & MAJOR VILLAINS IN EACH ISSUE???

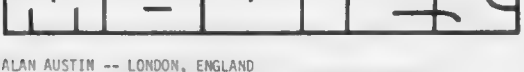
Gah! That's a monster. Index supplied by Bob Weinberg. There were 325 issues of "The Shadow" from vol. 1, #1 (April, 1931) to Vol. 55 #1 (summer 1949). I don't have a villain list, but how about a list of the Shadow's only recurring villains: Isaac Coffran-"Eyes of the Shadow", "Shadow Laughs", Diamond Bert Farwell-"Chinese Discs", The Wasp-"The Wasp", "The Wasp Returns". Voodoo Master--"Voodoo Master", "City of Doom", "Voodoo Trail", Shiwan Khan-"[illegible]", Shiwan Khan Returns", The Invincible Ghost-[illegible], "Master of Death", [illegible]edict Stark--"Prince of Evil", "Master Genius", "Man Who [illegible] Twice", "Devil's Playmaster", The Hand - "The Hand, 'Rackets King", "Murder For Sale", Chicago Crime", 'Crime Rides the Sea".

The [illegible] by Maxwell Grant (Walter Gibson)
(CA: Theodore Tinsley)
(BE: Bruce Elliott)
(LD: Lester Dent)

(1) V 1 # 1 Apr. 1939 The Living Shadow
(2) V 1 # 2 July 1931 The Eyes of the Shadow
(3) V 1 # 3 Oct. 1931 The Shadow Laughs
(4) V 1 # 4 Nov. 1931 The Red Menace
(5) V 1 # 5 Dec. 1931 Gangdom's Doom
(6) V 1 # 6 Jan. 1932 The Death Tower
(7) V 2 # 1 Feb. 1932 The Silent Seven
(8) V 2 # 2 Mar. 1932 The Black Master
(9) V 2 # 3 Apr. 1932 Mobsmen on the Spot
(10) V 2 # 4 May 1932 Hands in the Dark
(11) V 2 # 5 June 1932 Double Z
(12) V 2 # 6 July 1932 The Crime Cult
(13) V 3 # 1 Aug. 1932 The Blackmail Ring
(14) V 3 # 2 Sept 1932 Hidden Death
(15) V 3 # 3 Oct 1, 32 Green Eyes
(16) V 3 # 4 Oct 15,32 The Ghost Makers
(17) V 3 # 5 Nov 1, 32 The Five Chameleons
(18) V 3 # 6 Nov 15,32 Dead Men Live
(19) V 4 # 1 Dec 1, 32 The Romanoff Jewels
(20) V 4 # 2 Dec 15,32 Kings of Crime
(21) V 4 # 3 Jan 1, 33 Shadowed Millions
(22) V 4 # 4 Jan 15,33 The Creeping Death
(23) V 4 # 5 Feb 1, 33 The Shadow's Shadow
(24) V 4 # 6 Feb 15,33 Six Men of Evil
(25) V 5 # 1 Mar 1, 33 Fingers of Death
(26) V 5 # 2 Mar 15,33 Murder Trail
(27) V 5 # 3 Apr 1, 33 The Silent Death
(28) V 5 # 4 Apr 15,33 The Shadow's Justice
(29) V 5 # 5 May 1, 33 The Golden Grotto
(30) V 5 # 6 May 15,33 The Death-Giver
(31) V 6 # 1 June 1,33 The Red Blot
(32) V 6 # 2 Jun 15,33 The Ghost of the Manor
(33) V 6 # 3 Jul 1, 33 The Living Joss
(34) V 6 # 4 Jul 15,33 The Silver Scourge
(35) V 6 # 5 Aug 1, 33 The Black Hush
(36) V 6 # 6 Aug 15,33 The Isle of Doubt
(37) V 7 # 1 Sep 1, 33 The Grove of Doom
(38) V 7 # 2 Sep 15,33 Master of Death
(39) V 7 # 3 Oct 1, 33 Road of Crime
(40) V 7 # 4 Oct 15,33 The Death Triangle
(41) V 7 # 5 Nov 1, 33 The Killer
(42) V 7 # 6 Nov 15,33 Mox
(43) V 8 # 1 Dec 1, 33 The Crime Clinic
(44) V 8 # 2 Dec 15,33 Treasures of Death
(45) V 8 # 3 Jan 1, 34 The Embassy Murders
(46) V 8 # 4 Jan 15,34 The Wealth-Seeker
(47) V 8 # 5 Feb 1, 34 The Black Falcon
(48) V 8 # [illegible] Feb 15,34 Gray Fist
(49) V 9 # 1 Mar 1, 34 The Circle of Death
(50) V 9 # 2 Mar 15,34 The Green Box
(51) V 9 # 3 Apr 1, 34 Cobra
(52) V 9 # 4 Apr 15,34 Crime Circus
(53) V 9 # 5 May 1, 34 Tower of Death
(54) V 9 # 6 May 15,34 Death Clues
(55) V10 # 1 June 1,34 The Key
(56) V10 # 2 Jun 15,34 The Crime Crypt
(57) V10 # 3 July 1,34 Charg Monster
(58) V10 # 4 Jul 15,34 Chain of Death
(59) V10 # [illegible] Aug 1, 34 The Crime Master
(60) V10 # 6 Aug 15,34 Gypsy Vengeance
(61) V11 # 1 Sep 1, 34 Spoils of the Shadow
(62) V11 # 2 Sep 15,34 The Garaucan Swindle
(63) V11 # 3 Oct 1, 34 Murder Mash
(64) V11 # 4 Oct 15,34 The Death Sleep
(65) V11 # 5 Nov 1, 34 The Chinese Disks
(66) V11 # 6 Nov 15,34 Doom on the Hill
(67) V12 # 1 Dec 1, 34 The Unseen Killer
(68) V12 # 2 Dec 15,34 Cyro
(69) V12 # 3 Jan 1, 35 The Four Signets
(70) V12 # 4 Jan 15,35 The Blue Sphinx
(71) V12 # 5 Feb 1, 35 The Plot Master
(72) V12 # 6 Feb 15,35 The Dark Death
(73) V13 # 1 Mar 1, 35 Crooks Go Straight
(74) V13 # 2 Mar 15,35 Bells of Doom
(75) V13 # 3 Apr 1, 35 Lingo
(76) V13 # [illegible] Apr 15,35 The Triple Trail
(77) V13 # 5 May 1, 35 The Golden Quest
(78) V13 # 6 May 15,35 The Third Skull
(79) V14 # 1 Jun 1, 35 Murder Every Hour
(80) V14 # 2 Jun 15,35 Condor
(81) V14 # 3 Jul 1, 35 The Fate Joss
(82) V14 # 4 Jul 15,35 Atoms of Death
(83) V14 # 5 Aug 1, 35 The Man From Scotland Yard
(84) V14 # 6 Aug 15,35 The Creeper
(85) V15 # 1 Sep 1, 35 Mardi Gras Mystery
(86) V15 # 2 Sep 15,35 The London Crimes
(87) V15 # 3 Oct 1, 35 The Ribbon Clues
(88) V15 # 4 Oct 15,35 The House that Vanished
(89) V15 # 5 Nov 1, 35 The Chinese Tapestry
(90) V15 # 6 Nov 15,35 Python
(91) V16 # 1 Dec 1, 35 Zemba
(92) V16 # 2 Dec 15,35 The Case of Congressman Coy
(93) V16 # 3 Jan 1, 36 The Ghost Murders
(94) V16 # 4 Jan 15,36 Castle of Doom
(95) V16 # 5 Feb 1, 36 Death Rides the Skyway
(96) V16 # 6 Feb 15,36 The North Woods Mystery
(97) V17 # 1 Mar 1, 36 The Voodoo Master
(98) V17 # 2 Mar 15,36 The Third Shadow
(99) V17 # 3 Apr 1, 36 The Salamanders
(100) V17 # 4 Apr 15,36 The Man from Shanghai
(101) V17 # 5 May 1, 36 The Gray Ghost
(102) V17 # 6 May 15,36 The City of Doom
(103) V18 # 1 Jun 1, 36 The Crime Oracle
(104) V18 # 2 Jun 15,36 Murder Town

5)V18 # 3 July 1,36 The Yellow Door
6)V18 # 4 Jul 15,36 The Broken Napoleons
7)V18 # 5 Aug 1, 36 The Sledge Hammer Crimes
8)V18 # 6 Aug 15,36 Terror Island
9)V19 # 1 Sep 1, 36 The Golden Masks
10)V19 # 2 Sep 15,36 Jibaro Death
11)V19 # 3 Oct 1, 36 City of Crime
12)V19 # 4 Oct 15,36 Death by Proxy
13)V19 # 5 Nov 1, 36 Partners of Peril (TT)
14)V19 # 6 Nov 15,36 The Strange Disappearance of J. Cardona
15)V20 # 1 Dec 1, 36 Seven Drops of Blood
16)V20 # 2 Dec 15,36 Intimidation, Inc.
17)V20 # 3 Jan 1, 37 Vengeance Is Mine
18)V20 # 4 Jan 15,37 Foxhound (TT)
19)V20 # 5 Feb 1, 37 Loot of Death
20)V20 # 6 Feb 15,37 Quetzal
21)V21 # 1 Mar 1, 37 Death Token
22)V21 # 2 Mar 15,37 Murder House
23)V21 # 3 Apr 1, 37 Washington Crime
24)V21 # 4 Apr 15,37 The Masked Headsman
25)V21 # 5 May 1, 37 The Cup of Confucius (TT)
26)V21 # 6 May 15,37 Treasure Trail
27)V22 # 1 June 1,37 Brothers of Doom
28)V22 # 2 Jun 15,37 The Shadow's Rival
29)V22 # 3 Jul 1, 37 Crime Insured
30)V22 # 4 Jul 15,37 House of Silence
31)V22 # 5 Aug 1, 37 The Shadow Unmasks
32)V22 # 6 Aug 15,37 The Yellow Band
33)V23 # 1 Sep 1, 37 Buried Evidence
34)V23 # 2 Sep 15,37 The Radium Murders
35)V23 # 3 Oct 1, 37 The Pooltax Tangle (TT)
36)V23 # 4 Oct 15,37 The Keeper's Gold
37)V23 # 5 Nov 1, 37 Death Turrets
38)V23 # 6 Nov 15,37 Teeth of the Dragon
39)V24 # 1 Dec 1, 37 The Sealed Box
40)V24 # 2 Dec 15,37 Racket Town
41)V24 # 3 Jan 1, 38 The Crystal Buddha
42)V24 # 4 Jan 15,38 Hills of Death
43)V24 # 5 Feb 1, 38 The Fifth Napoleon (TT)
44)V24 # 6 Feb 15,38 The Murder Master
45)V25 # 1 Mar 1, 38 The Golden Pagoda
46)V25 # 2 Mar 15,38 Face of Doom
47)V25 # 3 Apr 1, 38 The Crimson Phoenix (TT)
48)V25 # 4 Apr 15,38 Serpents of Siva
49)V25 # 5 May 1, 38 Cards of Death
50)V25 # 6 May 15,38 The Hand
51)V26 # 1 June 1,38 Voodoo Trail
52)V26 # 2 Jun 15,38 The Racket King
53)V26 # 3 July 1,38 Murder For Sale
54)V26 # 4 Jul 15,38 The Golden Vulture (LD)
55)V26 # 5 Aug 1, 38 Death Jewels
56)V26 # 6 Aug 15,38 The Green Hoods
57)V27 # 1 Sep 1, 38 The Golden Dog Murders (TT)
58)V27 # 2 Sep 15,38 Crime Over Boston
59)V27 # 3 Oct 1, 38 The Dead Who Lived
60)V27 # 4 Oct 15,38 Vanished Treasure
61)V27 # 5 Nov 1, 38 The Voice
62)V27 # 6 Nov 15,38 Chicago Crime
63)V28 # 1 Dec 1, 38 Shadow Over Alcatraz
64)V28 # 2 Dec 15,38 Double Death
65)V28 # 3 Jan 1, 39 Silver Skull
66)V28 # 4 Jan 15,39 Crime Rides the Sea
67)V28 # 5 Feb 1, 39 Realm of Doom
68)V28 # 6 Feb 15,39 The Lone Tiger
69)V29 # 1 Mar 1, 39 River of Death (TT)
70)V29 # 2 Mar 15,39 The Vindicator
71)V29 # 3 Apr 1, 39 Death Ship
72)V29 # 4 Apr 15,39 Battle of Greed
73)V29 # 5 May 1, 39 Death's Harlequin (TT)
74)V29 # 6 May 15,39 The Three Brothers
75)V30 # 1 June 1,39 Smugglers of Death
76)V30 # 2 Jun 15,39 City of Shadows
77)V30 # 3 Jul 1, 39 Noose of Death
78)V30 # 4 Jul 15,39 Death From Nowhere
79)V30 # 5 Aug 1, 39 Isle of Gold
80)V30 # 6 Aug 15,39 Wizard of Crime
81)V31 # 1 Sep 1, 39 The Crime Ray
82)V31 # 2 Sep 15,39 The Golden Master
83)V31 # 3 Oct 1, 39 Castle of Crime
84)V31 # 4 Oct 15,39 The Masked Lady
85)V31 # 5 Nov 1, 39 Ships of Doom
86)V31 # 6 Nov 15,39 City of Ghosts
87)V32 # 1 Dec 1, 39 Shiwan Khan Returns
88)V32 # 2 Dec 15,39 House of Shadows
89)V32 # 3 Jan 1, 40 Death Premium
90)V32 # 4 Jan 15,40 The Hooded Circle
91)V32 # 5 Feb 1, 40 The Getaway Ring
92)V32 # 6 Feb 15,40 Voice of Death
93)V33 # 1 Mar 1, 40 The Invincible Shiwan Khan
94)V33 # 2 Mar 15,40 The Veiled Prophet
95)V33 # 3 Apr 1, 40 The Spy Ring
96)V33 # 4 Apr 15,40 The Prince of Evil (TT)
97)V33 # 5 May 1, 40 Death In the Stars
98)V33 # 6 May 15,40 Masters of Death
99)V34 # 1 Jun 1, 40 The Scent of Death
00)V34 # 2 Jun 15,40 Q
01)V34 # 3 July 1,40 Murder Genius (TT)
02)V34 # 4 Jul 15,40 Gems of Doom
03)V34 # 5 Aug 1, 40 Crime At Seven Oaks
04)V34 # 6 Aug 15,40 The Fifth Face
05)V35 # 1 Sep 1, 40 Crime County
06)V35 # 2 Sep 15,40 The Man Who Died Twice (TT)
07)V35 # 3 Oct 1, 40 The Wasp
08)V35 # 4 Oct 15,40 City of Fear
09)V35 # 5 Nov 1, 40 Crime Over Miami
10)V35 # 6 Nov 15,40 The Devil's Paymaster (TT)
11)V36 # 1 Dec 1, 40 Xitli, God of Fire
12)V36 # 2 Dec 15,40 The Shadow, the Hawk and the Skull
13)V36 # 3 Jan 1, 41 Forgotten Gold
14)V36 # 4 Jan 15,41 The Green Terror (TT)
15)V36 # 5 Feb 1, 41 The Wasp Returns
16)V36 # 6 Feb 15,41 The Chinese Primrose
17)V37 # 1 Mar 1, 41 Mansion of Crime
18)V37 # 2 Mar 15,41 The White Column
19)V37 # 3 Apr 1, 41 The Time Master (TT)
20)V37 # 4 Apr 15,41 The House on the Ledge
21)V37 # 5 May 1, 41 League of Death
22)V37 # 6 May 15,41 The Master of Flame (TT)
23)V38 # 1 Jun 1, 41 Crime Undercover
24)V38 # 2 Jun 15,41 The Thunder King
25)V38 # 3 Jul 1, 41 The Star of Delhi
26)V38 # 4 Jul 15,41 The Blur
27)V38 # 5 Aug 1, 41 The Crimson Death (TT)
28)V38 # 6 Aug 15,41 The Shadow Meets the Mask
29)V39 # 1 Sep 1, 41 Gems of Jeopardy
30)V39 # 2 Sep 15,41 The Devil-Master
31)V39 # 3 Oct 1, 41 Garden of Death
32)V39 # 4 Oct 15,41 Dictator of Crime
33)V39 # 5 Nov 1, 41 The Blackmail King
34)V39 # 6 Nov 15,41 Temple of Crime
35)V40 # 1 Dec 1, 41 Murder Mansion
36)V40 # 2 Dec 15,41 Crime's Stronghold
37)V40 # 3 Jan 1, 42 Alibi Trail
38)V40 # 4 Jan 15,42 The Book of Death
39)V40 # 5 Feb 1, 42 Death Diamonds
40)V40 # 6 Feb 15,42 Blue Face
41)V41 # 1 Mar 1, 42 Vengeance Bay
42)V41 # 2 Mar 15,42 Formula For Crime
43)V41 # 3 Apr 1, 42 Room of Doom
44)V41 # 4 Apr 15,42 The Jade Dragon
45)V41 # 5 May 1, 42 The Northdale Mystery
46)V41 # 6 May 15,42 Death's Bright Finger (TT)
47)V42 # 1 June 1,42 The Twins of Crime
48)V42 # 2 Jun 15,42 The Devil's Feud
49)V42 # 3 July 1,42 Five Ivory Boxes
50)V42 # 4 Jul 15,42 Death About Town
51)V42 # 5 Aug 1, 42 Legacy of Death
52)V42 # 6 Aug 15,42 Judge Lawless
53)V43 # 1 Sep 1, 42 The Vampire Murders
54)V43 # 2 Sep 15,42 The Syndicate of Sin (TT)
55)V43 # 3 Oct 1, 42 The Devil's Partner (TT)
56)V43 # 4 Oct 15,42 Clue for Clue
57)V43 # 5 Nov 1, 42 Trail of Vengeance
58)V43 # 6 Nov 15,42 The Murdering Ghost
59)V44 # 1 Dec 1, 42 The Hydra
60)V44 # 2 Dec 15,42 The Money Master

(261)V44 # 3 Jan 1, 43 The Museum Murders
(262)V44 # 4 Jan 15,43 Death's Masquerade
(263)V44 # 5 Feb 1, 43 The Devil Monsters
(264)V44 # 6 Feb 15,43 Wizard of Crime
(265)V45 # 1 Mar 1, 43 The Black Dragon
(266)V45 # 2 Apr. 1943 Young Men of Death (TT)
(267)V45 # 3 May, 1943 The Robot Master
(268)V45 # 4 June 1943 Murder Lake
(269)V45 # 5 July 1943 The Golden Doom (TT)
(270)V45 # 6 Aug. 1943 Message of Death
(271)V46 # 1 Sept 1943 House of Ghosts
(272)V46 # 2 Oct. 1943 King in the Black Market
(273)V46 # 3 Nov. 1943 The Muggers
(274)V46 # 4 Dec. 1943 Murder By Moonlight
(275)V46 # 5 Jan. 1944 The Crystal Skull
(276)V46 # 6 Feb. 1944 Syndicate of Death
(277)V47 # 1 Mar. 1944 The Toll of Death
(278)V47 # 2 Apr. 1944 Crime Caravan
(279)V47 # 3 May 1944 The Freak Show Murders
(280)V47 # 4 June 1944 Voodoo Death
(281)V47 # 5 July 1944 Town of Hate
(282)V47 # 6 Aug. 1944 Death In The Crystal
(283)V48 # 1 Sept 1944 The Chest of Chu-Chan
(284)V48 # 2 Oct. 1944 The Shadow Meets the Mask
(285)V48 # 3 Nov. 1944 Fountain of Death
(286)V48 # 4 Dec. 1944 No Time For Murder
(287)V48 # 5 Jan. 1945 Guardians of Death
(288)V48 # 6 Feb. 1945 The Merry Mrs. MacBeth
(289)V49 # 1 Mar. 1945 Five Keys To Crime
(290)V49 # 2 Apr. 1945 Death Has Gray Eyes
(291)V49 # 3 May 1945 Teardrops of Buddha
(292)V49 # 4 June 1945 Three Stamps of Death
(293)V49 # 5 July 1945 The Mask of Mephisto
(294)V49 # 6 Aug. 1945 Murder By Magic
(295)V50 # 1 Sept. 1945 The Taiwan Joss
(296)V50 # 2 Oct. 1945 A Quarter of Eight
(297)V50 # 3 Nov. 1945 The White Skulls
(298)V50 # 4 Dec. 1945 The Stars Promise Death
(299)V50 # 5 Jan. 1946 The Banshee Murders
(300)V50 # 6 Feb. 1946 Crime Out of Mind
(301)V51 # 1 Mar. 1946 The Mother Goose Murders
(302)V51 # 2 Apr. 1946 Crime Over Casco
(303)V51 # 3 May, 1946 The Curse of Thot
(304)V51 # 4 June 1946 Alibi Trail
(305)V51 # 5 July 1946 Malmordo
(306)V51 # 6 Aug. 1946 The Blackest Mail (BE)
(307)V52 # 1 Sept.1946 Happy Death Day (BE)
(308)V52 # 2 Oct. 1946 The Seven Deadly Arts (BE)
(309)V52 # 3 Nov. 1946 No Safety In Numbers (BE)
(310)V52 # 4 Dec. 1946 Death On Ice (BE)
(311)V52 # 5 Jan. 1947 Death Stalks The U.N. (BE)
(312)V52 # 6 Mar. 1947 Murder In White (BE)
(313)V53 # 1 May 1947 Room 1313 (BE)
(314)V53 # 2 July 1947 Model Murder (BE)
(315)V53 # 3 Sept. 1947 The Svengali Kill (BE)
(316)V53 # 4 Nov. 1947 The Jaberwocy Thrust (BE)
(317)V53 # 5 Jan. 1948 Ten Glass Eyes (BE)
(318)V53 # 6 Mar. 1948 The T.V. Murders (BE)
(319)V54 # 1 May, 1948 Murder On Main Street (BE)
(320)V54 # 2 July 1948 Reign of Terror (BE)
(321)V54 # 3 Sept 1948 The Jade Dragon
(322)V54 # 4 Fall 1948 Dead Man's Chest
(323)V54 # 5 Winter 1949 The Magigal's Mystery
(324)V54 # 6 Spring 1949 The Black Circle
(325)V55 # 1 Summer 1949 The Whispering Eyes



ALAN AUSTIN -- LONDON, ENGLAND
DID I SPOT LEONARD NIMOY IN A 30 SECOND SPEAKING PART AS A SOLDIER STANDING IN FRONT OF A MAP IN THE FILM "THEM"???

You sure did! Good eyes! Here's a list of Nimoy's film career: QUEEN FOR A DAY ('51), RHUBARB ('51), KID MONK BARONI ('52), FRANCIS GOES TO WEST POINT ('52), ZOMBIES OF THE STRATOSPHERE (12 chapter serial - '52) OLD OVERLAND TRAIL ('53), THEM ('54), SATAN'S SATELLITES (Edited version of "ZOMBIES" serial - '58), THE BALCONEY ('63), DEATHWATCH ('67), CATLOW ('72), THE ALPHA CAPER (tv-'74), THE MISSING ARE DEADLY (tv - '75). There's also another tv movie he did about a submarine in about 1969, not to mention the tv pilot for what might have been a series called BAFFLED ('73) but which he wasn't interested in doing as a series.

RON GOMES --
DO YOU HAVE A PERSONAL CHOICE FOR MOST UNDESERVED OSCAR? Hm. An opinion question, eh. How shall I approach it? I'll hafta' consider only the major awards...and acting awards are difficult to interpret one by one - so let's just look at all the "Best Picture" awards. My choice would certainly be in recent years since my opinion of Hollywood's last ten years is pretty low (though I think flix have improved tremendously in the last 3-4 years). I'd hafta' say that I think the winner of the least deserved Oscar (in my middlebrow opinion) would be a film that did nothing at all for me: "THE GODFATHER"...and then certainly "THE GODFATHER PART II" deserved it even less.

WHICH WALT DISNEY FILMS HAVE WON OSCARS?
Any sort of Oscar? OK...Dave Smith, watch me so I don't fall down go boom: *=live action
3 LITTLE PIGS ('33), TORTOISE & HARE ('35), 3 ORPHAN KITTENS ('35), THE OLD MILL ('37), FERDINAND THE BULL ('38), UGLY DUCKLING ('38), LEND A PAW ('41), DER FUEHRER'S FACE ('43), SEAL ISLAND*('49), BEAVER VALLEY*('50), NATURE'S HALF ACRE*('51), WATER BIRDS*('52), BEAR COUNTRY*('53), TOOT WHISTLE PLUNK & BOOM ('53), MEN AGAINST THE ARCTIC* ('55), WETBACK HOUND*('57), AMA GIRLS*('58), GRAND CANYON* ('59), HORSE WITH THE FLYING TAIL*('60), WINNIE THE POOH AND THE BLUSTERY DAY('68), IT'S TUFF TO BE A BIRD ('69), BEDKNOBS & BROOMSTICKS*('71). There were some special Oscars to Mickey Mouse and "SNOW WHITE" and such...maybe Dave can send me those.

MOVIE HALL OF INFAMY

LEE LANKFORD names as the all time worst flickers "The Eye Creatures", "Curse Of the Swamp Creature", "Creatures Of Destruction" (I don't think Lee likes creatures) and the 1960's version of "It's Alive".
BOB BLANSHARD names "The Sword & The Dragon"(Russian)
MIKE VALERIO flatly nominates "The Exorcist".
RON GOMES chooses "The Oscar", "Whiffs" and (Ron, are you nuts?) "Invasion of the Body Snatchers"!? (I think INVASION is a great movie but it has one big fubar in it: Y'know how the pod people would come and replace the hoomin beans when they fell asleep? Well, when Dana Wynter fell asleep in the mine, how was it that when she awoke she was the pod person alla' sudden?! There's a step missing there! That wasn't how it worked!)
KEVIN D'AMANDA nominates "Godzilla's Revenge", TV's "Planet Earth", "Attacks of" both "The Puppet People & "Mushroom People", "Curse of The Fly" and "Voyage Into Space".

That's that. All I need now say is that thou shouldst sendeth all queries on comics, pulps, TV, movies, etc. to me:

KENO DON ROSA; 7410 WOODHILL VALLEY ROAD;
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY 40222

Please remember to include a sprinkling of 13¢ stamps with your questions (research, you know. Just because I have 20,000 comic books doesn't mean that I obtain all my information from my own collection as I receive able assistance from Ray Miller, Craig Henderson and Jerry Bails, just to name a few). Also, send your questions to me, not to Jim Van Hise, because he doesn't have 20,000 comic books.

TRIVIA DEPARTMENT
Apparently nobody guessed the trick to my special Bicentennial questions of a few issues back! Only one correct answer (part E) poured in, all the way from Roger Budnick in Reykjavik Iceland! Answers:
A - Brainiac's brain circuits were designed by a man named Knor as told in Superman #200.
B - The reasons for Lady Blackhawk turning to crime were given in BLACKHAWK #200.
C - The Midgard serpent's appearance preceded the coming of Ragnarok in THOR #200.
D - The carrot bomb was unleashed on Bugs Bunny by Angus Macrory in 4-color #200.
E - A duck should feed a swimming pool full of carnivorous fish the following: 6 dressed goats and 20 dozen sausages, as seen in WDC&S #200.
Anyone notice a pattern here? Correct! All the issue numbers are composed of numerals found in the arabic system. How clever. Maybe I'll have a new trivia question next time. Be seeing you...

Don Rosa

2701 Maplewood Dr., Champaign, Ill 61820

HISTORY BY ASSOCIATION

FOR YOUR holiday amusement, a little game of association. The game has no rules; it has only a single guideline: How many aspects of the history, growth, and development of the comics can you associate with the characters depicted in the panels above?

The logo features some of my favorite comics. That probably goes without saying. But some of the figures here, while not precisely favorites of mine, deserve to be there for other more persuasive reasons. And here's where the association game comes in. In selecting comic characters for this montage, I tried to pick ones that were somehow significant in the comics. I obviously couldn't include every significant character, but those that I did include, I wanted to serve as reminders of others. As a logo, I wanted a frieze whose figures could be the emblems and icons of the history and potential of the art of the comic strip.

Thus, Milton Caniff is represented by the Dragon Lady and Alex Raymond by Flash Gordon. Caniff and Raymond, in turn, represent the pinnacles of achievement in the two prevalent schools of realistic comic strip rendering--the impressionistic and the illustrative--which the two cartoonists virtually established by reason of their exemplary performance respectively of each of the techniques.

The characters also represent the strips in which they appeared, each of which figures importantly in the adventure strip department of the history of the comic strip. In addition, the Dragon Lady, a memorable and individualistic character, suggests another of Caniff's contributions to the medium. He made the personalities of his characters integral to the stories he told, elevating the story-telling aspect of the art.

And this aspect of Caniff's art points to another genre of the comic strip, the soap opera strip, in which the personalities of the characters constitute the story to a great extent.

The world of the comic book --particularly that part populated by heroic characters, with or without super-powers-- is represented by Superman and Batman. An offshoot of the comic strip industry, the comic book doubtless would not have developed an art distinct in some ways from the art of the newspaper strip were it not for the immense popularity of Superman. The success of Superman and Batman spawned dozens of imitations, which, despite their similarities were original creations for comic books --not reprints of newspaper strips.

Among the legions of superheroes that followed Superman and the Caped Crusader onto the newsstands, only five, it seems to me, were different enough from these two models to be considered innovative creations. I'll mention three of them in this context, saving two (Plastic Man and The Spirit) for later.

Although scarcely of an originality equal to Superman or Batman, Captain Marvel, Captain America, and Marvel's Fantastic Four/Spiderman (to lump their distinctions together) each varied the superhero formula in novel ways. The fanciful and often tongue-in-cheek tenor of Captain Marvel's stories gave to his adventures a truly unique cast. Captain America, whose super-powers were created by "scientific" means, opened up a wide variety of origin possibilities (however obvious the scientific ploy must seem). And Marvel's superheroes with personalities added a new dimension to costumed heroics.

Of these characters--as well as all the others (too numerous or imitative to mention)--Superman and Batman are the emblems.

TARZAN and BUCK ROGERS, strips which established the continuity adventure strip (even though they didn't invent it), are represented in Burne Hogarth's rendering of the Ape Man and in Frank Frazetta's drawing of Wilma Deering.

The Tarzan drawing reminds us, too, that it was Hogarth who, perhaps more than any other cartoonist of the late thirties and early forties, exemplified the ways in which raw muscular power could be effectively rendered in a static medium. The rippling muscles of most modern superheroes owe much to Hogarth's pace-

GEE 'TS GONNA BE GREAT THAVE A LIL CHILD IN THE HOUSE FOR CHRISTMAS! BY CRACKIE, CHRISTMAS AINT CHRISTMAS WITHOUT YOUNGSTERS!
AW, COME ON GERTRUDE TELL UNCLE SAM'L WOT Y'WANT SANTY CLAUS T'BRING YE!
I HEARTILY DISAPPROVE OF THAT SORT OF NONSENSE, SAMUEL!
GERTRUDE'S EDUCATION HAS BEEN CONFINED EXCLUSIVELY TO FACTS.
-SO ALL THAT SENTIMENTAL BUNK ABOUT SANTA CLAUS IS MERELY AN INSULT TO THE CHILD'S INTELLIGENCE!
CLIFF STERRETT. 29
MY ADVICE T' YOU IS T MIND YER OWN BUSINESS PAW PERKINS!
IT'S MY BUSINESS TO TEACH LIL GERTRUDE THAT THERE'S A SANTY CLAUS IN SPITE OF THAT DERN CHILBLAIN SHE CALLS MAMA!
TICKETS TO THE PUPPET SHOW! GEE! PA, I WISH I WAS GOING!
AWRIGHT YOU TAKE HER THEN! WANT HER T'SEE IT 'CAUSE IT'S ALL ABOUT OLE SANTY CLAUS!
LISTEN HONEY COUSIN POLLY'S GONNA TAKE YOU TO A LOVELY MATINEE THIS AFTERNOON!
I'M SORRY BUT GERTRUDE WILL HAVE TO DECLINE WITH THANKS! SAMUEL!
WE HAVE TICKETS FOR "STRANGE INTERLUDE" THIS AFTERNOON!
CLIFF STERRETT. 12 9
WOTLL I DO SANTY? I WANT LIL GERTRUDE TO SEE YOU, BUT HOW?
THAT'S VERY SIMPLE, SAMBO EVERYONE CAN SEE ME, IF THEY TRY HARD ENOUGH!
TAKE LITTLE NEEWAH, FOR INSTANCE HE DONT HAVE ANY DIFFICULTY I'M SURE!
AND THAT GOES FOR LITTLE COCOA, AS WELL!
PRRRR!
GREAT GUNS, KITTY! YOU, TOO!
CLIFF STERRETT. 12 16

IN THE SEASONAL SPIRIT, these vintage Cliff Sterrett POLLY AND HER PALS strips from 1929. Sterrett's line became firmer, less sketchy, his shapes more regular and geometric, and his blacks more solid and more rhythmically balanced as he sharpened his style into the thirties. More about Sterrett's distinctive style in the future. For the nonce, feast your eyes on the graphics, take the message to heart, and note that the success of the sequence depends upon visual/verbal interdependence (beginning particularly with December 16). Neither the words nor the pictures make as much sanse without the other.

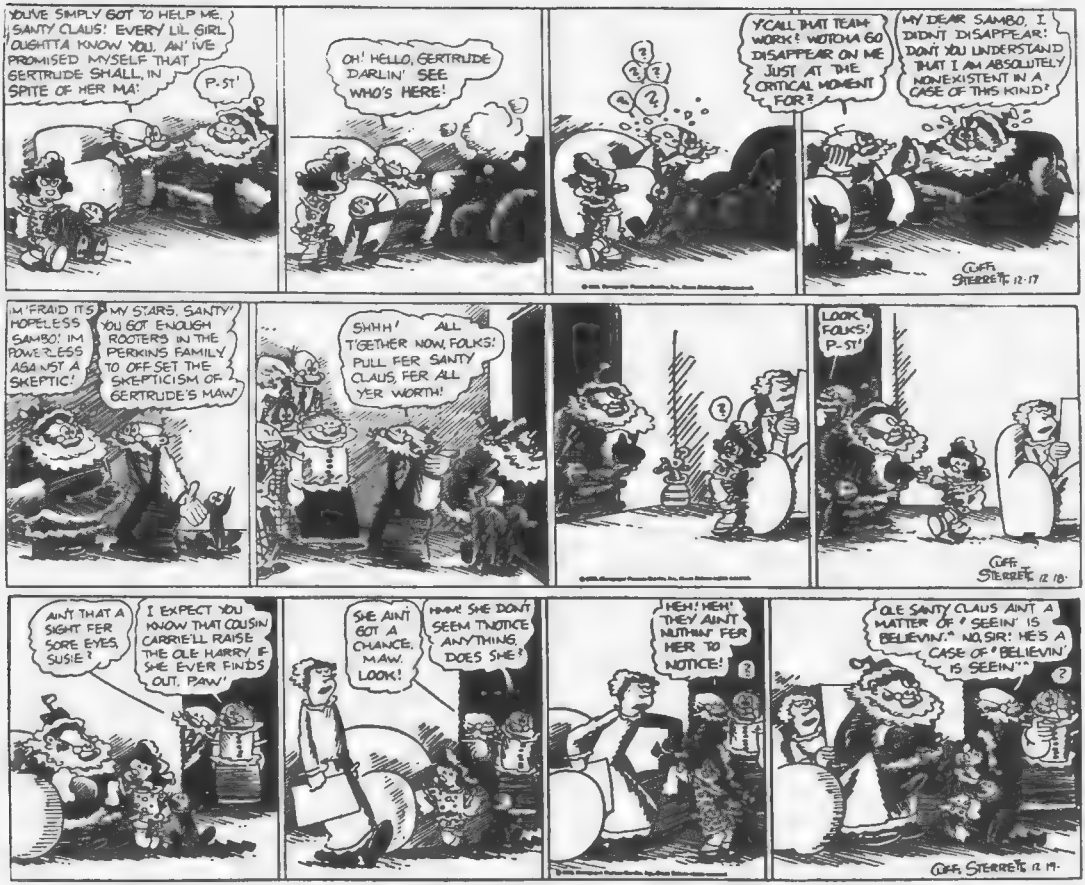
setting style.

Frazetta's Wilma demonstrates not only the artist's renown ability to depict women erotically; it also, by reason of Frazetta's career, suggests the potential of comic art. Frazetta, still fundamentally a cartoonist who draws from mental images rather than models, has taken the techniques of comic strip art and thrust them conspicuously upon the world of book illustration, and I include a sample of his work in the frieze of this column because it is emblematic of the fine art to which the art of the comics has been elevated.

Frazetta's reaching outside the comics medium reminds us of other cartoonists who've gone beyond the panels of comic strips to find success in the related fields of illustration. Russell Patterson and Jack Davis come immediately to mind.

THE EARLY HISTORY of the comic strip is represented by the relatively primitive style found in George Herriman's rendering of KRAZY KAT. The extent to which the artwork of a comic strip can be patterned design as well as visual representation is suggested in Cliff Sterrett's POLLY AND HER PALS, all of whom are recalled here by Polly's father and the nameless family cat. This cat recalls another nameless cat--Cicero's, who appeared in a topper for years to Bud Fisher's MUTT AND JEFF. And thus are we reminded of the first daily comic strip.

But POLLY calls up yet an-


YOUVE SIMPLY GOT TO HELP ME, SANTY CLAUS! EVERY LIL GIRL OUGHTTA KNOW YOU, AN' I'VE PROMISED MYSELF THAT GERTRUDE SHALL, IN SPITE OF HER MA!
P-ST!
OH! HELLO, GERTRUDE DARLIN' SEE WHO'S HERE!
Y'CALL THAT TEAM WORK! WOTCHA GO DISAPPEAR ON ME JUST AT THE CRITICAL MOMENT FOR?
MY DEAR SAMBO, I DIDNT DISAPPEAR! DONT YOU UNDERSTAND THAT I AM ABSOLUTELY NONEXISTENT IN A CASE OF THIS KIND?
CLIFF STERRETT 12-17
I'M 'FRAID IT'S HOPELESS SAMBO! I'M POWERLESS AGAINST A SKEPTIC!
MY STARS, SANTY! YOU GOT ENOUGH ROOTERS IN THE PERKINS FAMILY TO OFF SET THE SKEPTICISM OF GERTRUDE'S MAW!
SHHH! ALL T'GETHER NOW, FOLKS! PULL FER SANTY CLAUS, FER ALL YER WORTH!
LOOK FOLKS! P-ST!
CLIFF STERRETT 12 18
AIN'T THAT A SIGHT FER SORE EYES, SUSIE?
I EXPECT YOU KNOW THAT COUSIN CARRIE'LL RAISE THE OLE HARRY IF SHE EVER FINDS OUT, PAW!
SHE AIN'T GOT A CHANCE, MAW. LOOK!
HMM! SHE DON'T SEEM T'NOTICE ANYTHING, DOES SHE?
HEH! HEH! THEY AIN'T NUTHIN' FER HER TO NOTICE!
OLE SANTY CLAUS AIN'T A MATTER OF "SEEIN' IS BELIEVIN." NO, SIR! HE'S A CASE OF "BELIEVIN' IS SEEIN'"
CLIFF STERRETT 12 19

other image--that of another girl strip, BLONDIE, which, once it became a family strip, became one of the most widely printed comics in history.

Walt Disney's place in the history of cartooning is recalled by Donald Duck. Disney, more than any other cartoonist, established the animated cartoon industry and raised high standards for the practice of that art.

But this Donald Duck, Carl Barks', also draws attention to the potential of the comics for displaying the uniquely individual creative genius of each cartoonist. Working with a corporate character, Barks infused his ducks with a humor and point of view distinctly his own and rendered them in a style unmistakably Barksian.

While there are numerous other cartoonists whose special brand of humor distinguishes their work in markedly individual ways, I've picked only a few of their creations to serve as emblems of the breed.

Krazy, obviously, is one. But E.C. Segar's POPEYE is another, and Crockett Johnson's BARNABY (represented here by his fairy godfather, Mr. O'Malley) is yet another. The special character of these three strips could not survive the death or retirement of their creators, and that fact alone demonstrates the unique qualities that each man brought to his creation.

Comic book characters, because they are so often the product of several creative minds, less often reflect directly the individual genius of those who produce them. Barks is the exception here, not the rule. But Jack Cole's Plastic Man and Will Eisner's Spirit are clearly in the same class as Barks' Duck.

The elegant simplicity of BARNABY's graphic style suggests another simply rendered strip (as well as its stylistic imitators)--Charles Schulz's PEANUTS. Here again is a strip that is solely the product of its creator's individuality--not capable of duplication or even successful imitation.

The chief representative of this aspect of the art of the comic strip is Walt Kelly's POGO. And POGO suggests as well the greatest achievement to which the comic strip can as-

pire. In POGO, Kelly exploited the potential of the medium to an extent never before attained. Caricature and social/political commentary fused with story, both visual and verbal, in one of the greatest works of satirical comment in this century. In his social and political commentary, Kelly continued and expanded the traditions begun by Harold Gray in LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE; and he refined to a subtler art the broader burlesques of Al Capp's LI'L ABNER.

Well. That's my holiday association game--a rambling sort of non-chronological history. If you've read this far, you've been playing along with me. Who have I left out? What is unsaid? Many, no doubt--and volumes. But that's why it is a game: any number can play, each with his contribution revealing his own perceptions of the growth and development of the art of the comic strip.

A SOCIO-HISTORY OF COMIC BOOKS

LAST FALL, Leslie Fiedler--professor of literature (at SUNY, Buffalo) and author (of LOVE AND DEATH IN THE AMERICAN NOVEL among others)--pretended to review the current spate of books on comics (Horn's ENCYCLOPEDIA, Lee's ORIGINS, and the APEX TREASURY) in the NY TIMES BOOK REVIEW (September 5). He didn't review the books, though; instead, he gave us his own version of the history of the comic book.

Comic books began for Fiedler (both personally and historically) in the late 1920's as 8-page bibles--irreverent assaults on conventional morality that depicted popular comic strip characters in orgies of sexual fantasy.

The "respectable second start" made by comic books in the late 1930's appealed (he goes on) to the same appetites as had the 8-pagers--except that the essentially violent sexuality of the Tijuana bibles was transformed into its more acceptable version, physical violence in the name of law and order.

Thus the exploits of Superman were just as "essentially phallic, horrific, and magical" as Tillie the Toiler and Mac's "sexual acts beyond the scope" of Fiedler's 12-year-old fantasies a few years before.

Moreover, Superman addressed himself to modern fears--nightmare fears of unnamed and mostly unknown villainies lurking in the city streets. Unlike the rest of us, Superman (says Fiedler) knows with certainty who the enemies are and can destroy them--"not with technology, which is in itself equivocal, but with his bare hands," a solution much more satisfying to a desire for definitive action. Superman and his kin thus promised to assuage many of the anxieties brought on by World War II: he, at least, seemed capable of finding and destroying the threatening enemy.

Unhappily, WWII was resolved not by superheroic hand-to-hand combat but by science and machines. Superheroism was therefore shown to be a fraud.

Moreover, the post-WWII period brought into question the legitimacy of notions of good and evil--thanks to the cold war. A war that offered no chance for definitive, end-all acts of aggression against an enemy seemed a war in which the evil of the enemy was somehow not assured. Because wars like the Korean War could not be fought to a conclusive victory for one side, then neither side could be wholly right. Laws, mores, and the kind of patriotism essential to superheroics were compromised. Reasons for combat were dubious.

Finally, says Fiedler, "the only uncompromised law seemed violence for its own sake and the real enemy, therefore, the forces of law and order who sought to make violence a monopoly of the state." Aggression had outgrown its old social uses.

"The old supercomics had been too compromised by their espousal of official patriotism to satisfy the new hunger for unmediated violence and the new attempt to allay paranoia by identifying with the criminal rather than his victim." Psychologically, says Fiedler, we were ready for the E.C. "new trend" comics with their emphasis on horror, war, and violence.

In reaction, the Comics Code emasculated the comics. Good taste and good grammar were championed. Comic books had come a long way from their origins as irrevent 8-pagers.

BUT WITH THE Marvel revival of superheroes in the '60's, comic books again returned to their adversary role in American culture. Marvel's heroes with personalities undercut the super patriotism of the superhero. No longer perfect, no longer sure of themselves, the new superheroes suffered a variety of soap opera hangups. The beautiful superhero was replaced by the super freak--the Hulk, the Thing.

In attacking and parodying the traditional notion of the superhero, Marvel's superheros reverted to the unconventional irreverence that, according to Fiedler, had been the stock in trade of comic books since those scabrous sex books of the '20's. And the emergence of underground comix during the same period Fiedler takes as additional support for his thesis.

At this point, Fiedler stops. He foresees the end of comic books as "the scriptures of cultural revolution," as irreverent adversaries of the status quo. The encyclopedias and histories and anthologies on his desk for review suggest that the comic book is now but

DEPT. OF SMALL VICTORIES--We have a comic book fan in the White House. When Jimmy Carter was preparing for the first debate, his aides caught him relaxing by reading comic books with his daughter. About as good a preparation as any, he's reported as saying.

a record, a relic, of the revolution--not its bible. Such scholarly treatment of the subject, Fiedler seems to say, will end by institutionalizing comic books, dulling their anti-establishment sting by making them artifacts. So Fiedler writes their eulogy.

Fiedler's socio-psycho-history presents a fascinating theory. Like many theories of its kind, it strikes me as more poetry than fact. But that doesn't make it any the less fascinating. Or any the less true: good poetry, after all, is "true." The question, then, must be: is Fiedler's poetry any good?

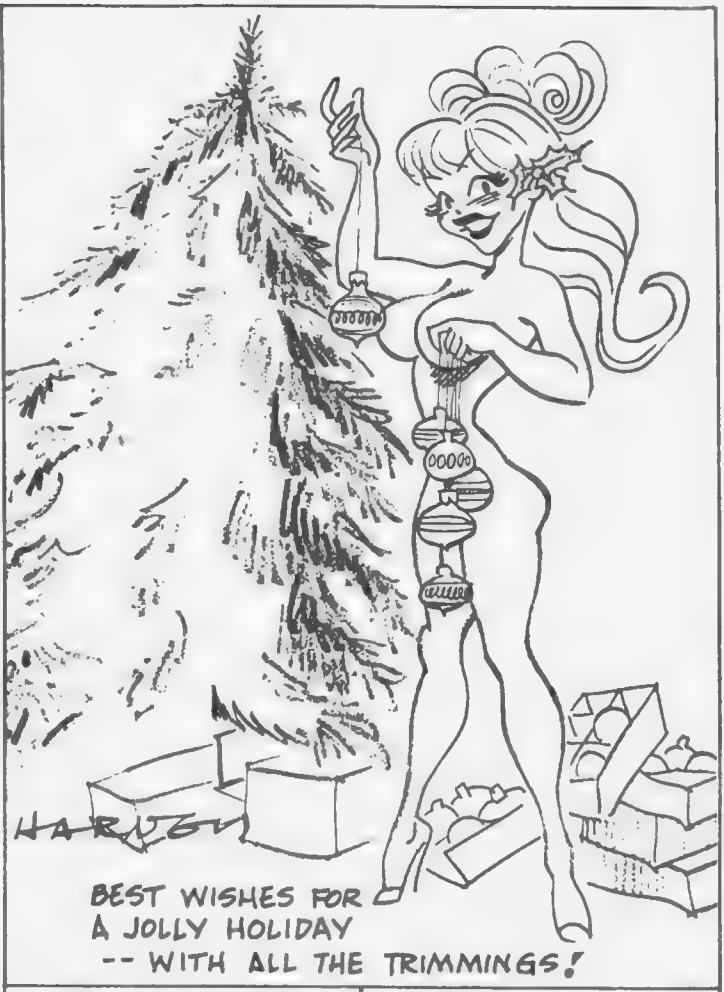
This much seems certain: although comic book superheroes make acts of aggression acceptable by giving them moral purpose, they are engaging nonetheless in aggressive behavior normally beyond the pale for civilized societies. Their vigilante exploits must be seen as anti-social in some respects.

If the usual forces of law and order are not seen as impotent in the face of the dangers that superheroes face, how else can we justify the superhero's actions? And if those forces are impotent, then something is wrong in society.

Thus, the superhero can be seen as essentially critical of his society. We value such free-wheeling crusaders because they cut quickly through the institutional red tape that impedes and frustrates us all. Superheroes provide an outlet for our frustration, a way of indulging vicariously in otherwise forbidden hostile aggression.

Although the superhero may share our moral vision, he is still anti-social insofar as he seems above the law's usual machinations. It is not that he is opposed to society's conventions so much as that he transcends them. But in so doing, he attacks them by showing their limitations.

If this is what Fiedler means when he says comic books



fill essentially irreverent adversary roles in society, then perhaps his history holds together. And with that, much of his theory.

But it does not follow that studying comics or anthologizing them in hardcover signals the end of the comic book's role as implicit social critic (that is, as outlet for otherwise anti-social sympathies). Even as Fiedler demonstrates, comic books are amazingly resilient and have met the challenge of changing times successfully in the past.

Fiedler's fear is the school teacher's fear--that whatever he touches will turn to lead. It grows out of a classroom experience common to student and teacher alike. But even if some classroom treatments of some subjects successfully make a lively subject a dull one, scholarly study of the comics itself cannot impinge much upon the flow of creative juices in cartoonists' veins. And as long as the comics derive their life from cartoonists and not scholars, there is little danger that academic boredom will develop.

—HARV

KEYHOLE, installment number 41.
Written by Gary Brown, 9423 SW 75th Street, Apt. W-11, Miami, Florida 33173.
Intended for the 132nd issue of XBCC.
Logo art by Doug Potter.

(*)

Back in the 1950's the Dell group of comics had the market on television and motion picture adaptations cornered. They had a seemingly endless string of contracts with all the major studios to turn their current hits or all-time stars into comic book characters. I Love Lucy, Gunsmoke, Maverick, Ben Hur, My Favorite Martian...you name it. As soon as the new television season began, a flock of one-shot comics from Dell would flood the stands with their version of the new shows. Of course, many of the comics failed to capture the flavor of certain shows. But then again, some of the comics were even better than the shows and managed to last longer.

It was an era that faded shortly after Gold Key was formed and assumed the contractual obligations of Western Printing. Today we still have an occassional television or movie spin-off in the comics, but they are short-lived. Mostly Disney creations backed by the magic name of Uncle Walt.

Not long ago Charlton stepped into the market, winning the Hanna-Barbera contract to turn Saturday morning cartoons into comic book adventures. They furthered their experimentation by signing up such heavies as Space:1999 and the Six Million Dollar Man and Emergency. The latter two were the hit of the year and certainly had a large following of boys in the 6 to 12 bracket -- ideal comic book buying material.

But they failed miserably. Perhaps much of the blame can be put on the already sagging shoulders of the Charlton comic book line. Then again, it might also be a proper reflection of the lost comic book audience. Whatever it might be, it is hard to believe that a show like Six Million Dollar Man cannot support a comic book adaptation. Are comics in that much danger?

Over the past few years I have constantly wondered why comic companies don't jump at the chance of capturing a new and hot star in a book, or taking a current fad and capitalizing on it before it fades into nostalgia land. These generally would not be long term books or ideas (exceptions to the rule certainly will happen), but would be marketed during a particular time and then dropped.

Who or what is the hottest character around these days? Fonzie. The Fonz is the darling of the younger set and a key to the immediate past for many young parents. Happy Days and the Fonz is being marketed on every real product you can imagine. Soap, notebooks, pencils, records, shirts. Why not comic books? Would a ten year old kid who is enamored of the 'coolness' of it all jump at the chance to buy a Happy Days comic book? Aaayyyhhh! Sure. It's hot. Next year it might be something else. But now it's the Fonz.

So where are the comic book companies? Beating their brains out with such winners as Son of Satan and Kobra. Marvel is sticking to a run-into-the-ground formula; DC insists on bringing back characters in new books that have failed three and four times before; Gold Key doesn't seem to know what to do; and Harvey and Archie stick to their own formulas like glue.

Comic books are an instant medium. Part of the throw-away culture. So why don't these companies have their finger on the pulse of the "now" instead of their thumb on the knob of yesterday? Why don't we get a Happy Days or Laverne and Shirley comic book? Why isn't someone grinding out a

Charlie's Angels book -- the instant hit of 1976? It boggles the mind. If the toy industry took the same attitude, they'd be still pushing hula hoops, wondering why no one buys them.

To their credit, most of the companies have tried to present somewhat of a "current trend" in their books. Archie probably does the best job of it by putting their characters in various recognizable situations dealing with the current fare in America. Betty and Me featured a "Betty Cooper, Betty Cooper" take-off long before Vera Valiant made the scene. Archie and his pals have constantly dealt with pet rocks, disco, super-heroes, violence and ecology in their individual books. But then again, they are using the same jokes in the same drawing style and it is all getting a bit old.

Marvel had the biggest success in recent years with their Kung Fu characters. They hit on the fad at the right time and more than made their few 'bucks' off the idea. DC finally got into the kung fu idea two years after it faded and can't seem to understand what all the fuss was about. Of course you've all heard the story about how DC, through Warner Brothers, had a chance to publish a Kung Fu book based on the television show, but it was turned down as "not feasible." Besides, we are told, David Carridine was making noises like he didn't want his caricature on anything without his personal approval. So the whole load was dropped and several million comics were never sold.

The Hula Hoop Principle.

DC is now entering the market, but it seems to be a 'toe first' attitude to test the waters. Three of their four books are their own characters -- taken from current television programs -- Shazam, Super Friends and Isis. The last one, Welcome Back Kotter, is a fresh book with great possibilities, since the show and several of the stars are quite popular these days. Of course the comic book has captured none of the magic of the show, trying to give readers long and drawn own morality plays instead of the sharp and quick humor of the show. The second issue was so bad that the credits were left off of it.

Marvel has also made other attempts in this field, doing various classic and motion picture adaptations. Their "Classic Comics" have been mostly reprints from Fillipino products and poor adaptations at that. The movie side of the coin has been a tad better, but why in the name of Kong must they do adaptations of grade B, rotten, terrible movies?

Before I ramble on, let me turn the leaf over and defend the situation for a bit. There are reasons why all these television and motion picture contracts aren't always readily available. The studios have, at times, made impossible demands upon an industry thatis struggle to stay alive. Large sums of money are requested. Certain rules are laid down, making it difficult to produce a comic book, much less a parody.

Such was the fact in the Charlton dealings with Universal Studios in obtaining the Six Million Dollar Man and Emergency contracts. A publicity man, of sorts, took over the production of the comic books, telling how the characters should look, having cover and story approval, and demanding that illustrations be changed and re-worked time and time again. While we can back-handedly applaude such a devotion to the character, we must also remember that this man had no knowledge of comic books or their schedules and created an unworkable atmosphere. Relations between company and artists were so strained that two staff members quit because of unreasonable demands made by Universal. With this sort of interference, turning out comic books is close to impossible.

There is also another drawback to this, that being the characters in the comic books are owned by someone else, therefore marketing possibilities is impossible. Comic companies would rather create their own characters (or have someone else create them and then refuse to acknowledge their existance) and reap all the benefits of coloring books, plastic toys and puzzles.

But instead of looking out the window and seeing how people are living today, comic books continue to give us mores and straight lines from the 1940s. They perpetuate Nazis and World War II. Outdated language and cardboard characters. Not that Fonzie will save comic books mind you, but what is wrong with having a comic book that sells 50%, rather than shipping them all back to the publisher? Anyone want to buy a hula hoop?

THE
PERTWILLABY
PAPERS
EPISODE
130

JUNEAU
STATE FLY

PERTWILLABY, I CAN'T SAY AS I LIKE THIS METHOD OF TRAVEL WE'VE BEEN FORCED INTO. IF GOD HAD MEANT ME TO FLY, HE'D HAVE GIVEN ME A STEWARDESS.
YES, LANCEY— TRYING TO REACH THE POLE IN A HOT-AIR BALLOON IS AN EASY WAY TO TRAVEL... BUT WE CAN'T CONTROL OUR FLIGHT.
WINK

FREDDIE... FEATHER... I REALIZE WHAT COMPLICATIONS THIS MODE OF TRANSPORTATION HAS LADEN ON US. TRUE-WE'RE SAILING EFFORTLESSLY OVER THE ICESCAPE, YET WE'RE AT THE MEANDERING MERCY OF THE FICKLE WINDS. MY CALCULATIONS INDICATE THAT IN THE WEEKS SINCE WE LEFT POINT BARROW OUR COURSE HAS BEEN GENERALLY NORTH.

"...HOWEVER, FOR ALL OUR SWIFTNESS, I'D GUESS WE'RE MAKING NO BETTER PROGRESS THAN THE MYSTERIOUS FAIR TRAVELLING A MORE DIRECT ROUTE VIA DOG-SLED... OR OUR OTHER UNKNOWN COMPETITOR WE'VE SEEN HEADING NORTH BY SNOW-MOBILE. HIS VENICLE IS SWIFTER THAN THE DOG SLED, YET HE MUST DETOUR AROUND THE ROUGHER TERRAIN WHICH THE DOGS CAN NEGOTIATE."

IT SEEMS OBVIOUS THAT WE SHARE A COMMON GOAL WITH THESE OPPOSING PARTIES: THE POLE, AND, MORE SPECIFICALLY, THE ART TREASURES LOOTED FROM THE MUSEUMS & CATHEDRALS OF EUROPE DURING W.W.II. COLLECTED BY HERMAN GOERING, AND LATER HIDDEN SOMEWHERE NEAR THE POLE BY MARTIN BORMANN AT THE CLOSE OF THE WAR

AND I FEAR THAT OUR ANTAGONISTS MAY NOT HAVE THE SAME PHILANTHROPIC INTENT FOR THOSE ART TREASURES AS HAVE WE... THAT IS, IF AND WHEN ANYONE FINDS THE CACHE.
HUNGH. BOSS, YOU TALK TOO LOT 'BOUT CRAZY JUNK ONE DOES NOT UNNERSTAN'. ONE WOULD MORE LIKE TO TALK ON IMPORTANT STUFF.
LIKE... HUNGH. HEY BOSS— ONE WOULD LIKE TO LAUGH WITH YOUR WOMAN. HUNGH? HOW 'BOUT?
MY WOMAN? WHAT WO— OH, YOU MUST MEAN FEATHER. (?) WHY... CERTAINLY — GO RIGHT AHEAD. EXCERCISE YOUR RISIBILITY ON FEATHER ALL YOU LIKE, IF THAT'S YOUR WHIM.
"RISIBIL" HUNGH! ONE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT YOU AMERICANS CALL YOURS ... BUT ONE'S IS WELL EXCERCISED!
IN FACT, IF FEATHER ISN'T IN A JOVIAL MOOD, I'D BE HAPPY TO HAVE A LAUGH WITH YOU. THE STATUS QUO IS A BIT DEPRESSING OF LATE.
HUNGH!? WHAT YOU?! ONE OF THOSE "FUNNY" ESKIMOS!?
LANCEYYY... I SAW THIS OLD ANTHONY QUINN MOVIE ONCE... AND I DON'T BELIEVE YOU QUITE UNDERSTAND WHAT...
OH, COME NOW FEATHER. DON'T BE SO DISCOURTEOUS. HAVE A LAUGH OR TWO WITH OUR ARCTIC FRIEND.
AFTER ALL, AS PATRIOTIC AMERICANS IN THIS BICENTENNIAL YEAR, WE HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO SHOW LESS FORTUNATE NATIONALITIES THAT WE CAN... WE...
!!!
HERE NOW! WE'LL HAVE NONE OF THAT! UP TILL NOW YOUR ETIQUETTE HAS BEEN IMPECCABLE; ON THE OTHER HAND, I'M AFRAID I FIND THIS UNTOWARD BEHAVIOR NOT TO BE A CREDIT TO YOUR RACE.
TAKE 'ER EASY THERE LANCE-BOY! HAVE A HEART! AFTER ALL, COLD SHOWERS ARE FEW AND FAR BETWEEN HERE IN THE ARCTIC.
PUNT
JUST THE SAME, LIL-SNOOKUMS SHOULD KEEP HIS MIND ON STOKING THE AIR-HEATER FOR THE BALLOON.
YES... SPEAKING OF WHICH, WHAT'RE WE USING FOR FUEL? WE LANDED SEVERAL TIMES, AND LIL-SNOOKUMS GATHERED BUNCHES OF THE STUFF FOR. THESE BINS OUT HERE ON THE DECK. WHAT IS IT? ARCTIC DRIFT-WOOD?
2

LIL' SNOOKUMS I DON'T THINK YOU SHOULD TELL HIM, I MEAN RECALL HIS REACTION WHEN
HUNGH. IT BURN GOOD. BESIDES, WHAT ELSE IS THERE? ALL WE HAVE IS POLAR BEAR KAKA...
YAAAAAAA!

NOW SEE WHAT YOU'VE DONE HERE - GIVE ME A HAND, FEATHER... I'VE GOT A GRIP ON HIS PANTS LEG.
NO! I CAN'T TAKE IT! LET GO! LET GO!!!

MEANWHILE, ELSEWHERE IN THE VAST STRETCHES OF BARREN ICE-PACK:

I'M VARNING YOU, HERR ROATCH. IFF YOU PASS OUT UND ROLL OFF DER SLED CHUST VUNCE MORE, I'M NOT STOPPING TO PICK YOU UP! EITHER SINK OR SWIM! DIS JOURNEY VILL SEPERATE DER ARYANS FRUM DER BOYS.
SNAP

PROF. SMYTE! YOU PROMISED THAT WE'D OBTAIN THIS LOST ART TROVE FOR THE ROATCH COLLECTION... AND THAT YOU WEREN'T MERELY USING ME AND MY BANK ACCOUNT FOR YOUR OWN ENDS. I'LL THANK YOU TO HAVE A BIT MORE RESPECT, OR YOU'LL GET NO MORE FUNDS FROM SCHUYLER ROATCH III!

HERR ROATCH - YOU MAY NOT REALIZE IT BUT IT IS QVITE DIFFIKULT TO GET A PERSONAL CHECK KASHED VHILE IN DER CENTER UF FOUR MILLION SQVARE MILES UF ABSOLUTE NOTTIN'!... DAT IS UNLESS YOU HAFF YOUR BANKAMERIKARD
YOU... YOU'VE MADE YOUR POINT.

ALL VE HAFF TO DO IS BEAT PERTVILLABY TO DER ART TREASURES UND DEY VILL ALL BE MINE - ER - YOURS. DER STATUTES UF LIMITATIONS HAFF RUN OUT LONG AGO... UND DER ENTIRE TROVE VILL BELONG TO DER FINDER.
WHA - WHAT'S THAT AHEAD?

HM. VALRUSES. A KOLONY UF VALRUSES... SEVERAL T'OUSAND UF 'EM. UND DEY'RE BLOCKING OUR ROUTE.

TACKY LOOKING BEASTS, AREN'T THEY!
I DUN'T KARE HOW UNFASHIONABLE DEY MAY BE... VE HAFF GOT TO GO RIGHT T'ROUGH DEIR MIDST. IT CHOULD BE SAFE ENUFF IFF VE LEAD DER DOGS... DER VALRUSES ARE CHUST BASKING DEMSELVES PEACEABLY IN DER SUN.
ZZ
A.J

HORRORS! I'M IN THE MIDDLE OF A C. AUBREY SMITH LOOK-ALIKE CONVENTION.
SILENCE, HERR ROATH. STEP SMARTLY.
SIGH.
SORRY, OLD FREUND.
CLIK
KRAW
KRAW
LANCEY! DID YOU HEAR THAT? SOUNDED LIKE DISTANT SHOTS.
PLEASE, FREDDIE, RELAX. THIS IS HARMLESS INERT ORGANIC WASTE. WE'RE SIMPLY UTILIZING ITS EXCELLENT COMBUSTIBLE QUALITIES TO...
HUNGH. HEY BOSS. YOU NEVER TELL ONE WHAT WE LOOK FOR AT NORTH POLE PLACE. WHAT THIS "ART" STUFF YOU ALLA' TIME TAWKIN' 'BOUT?
WELL, THE OBJECT OF OUR QUEST IS A CACHE OF VERY PRECIOUS ART TREASURES THAT WERE LOOTED DURING A GLOBAL CONFLICT OF 3 DECADES PAST. WE'RE APPARENTLY IN COMPETITION WITH OTHERS DUE TO, IN PHILISTINE TERMS, THE INCREDIBLE MONETARY VALUE OF THE SECRETED MASTERWORKS
WHAT HE SAY? IZZIT GOODER THAN FISH HOOKS?

IN ESKIMO LINGO, LIL-SNOOKUMS, THIS IS ART LIKE YOUR... EH... "ORGANIC" CARVINGS & ITS WORTH A LOTTA' BLUBBER! WITH THE JACK WE'RE TALKIN ABOUT, YOU COULD GO TO FAIRBANKS AND EVERY WOMAN IN TOWN WOULD WANNA' LAUGH WITH YOU! LAUGH? WHY BOY, YOU COULD GET DOWN-RIGHT FILTHY HYSTERICAL!
HUNGH! THAT SOUND LIKE GOOD STUFF BOSS! WHEN WE FIND "ART", WE GO TO CITY PLENTY QUICK HUH? MAKE PLENTY LAUGH.

FRANKLY, NO. WITH THE HELP OF THE LOUVRE CURATOR WHO HAS AGREED TO ACT AS MEDIATOR & RESEARCHER, WE PLAN ON RETURNING ALL THE MASTERPIECES TO THE MUSEUMS AND CATHEDRALS IN FRANCE AND ITALY FROM WHENCE THEY CAME, IF WE CAN FIND IT ALL.

HUNGH?! HUNGH?! NO LAUGH?! GIVE AWAY?! IVAN AT THE RUSSIAN WEATHER STATION SAY YOU AMERICANS WERE "DECADENT" BUT HE NOT KNOW HALF OF IT! YOU GOT FROZE HEAD BRAIN!
WELL, BE THAT AS IT MAY, THAT'S THE PLAN.

HUNGH! LIL-SNOOKUMS WANT LAUGH WITH CITY WOMANS. LIL-SNOOKUMS WANT "ART" STUFF.

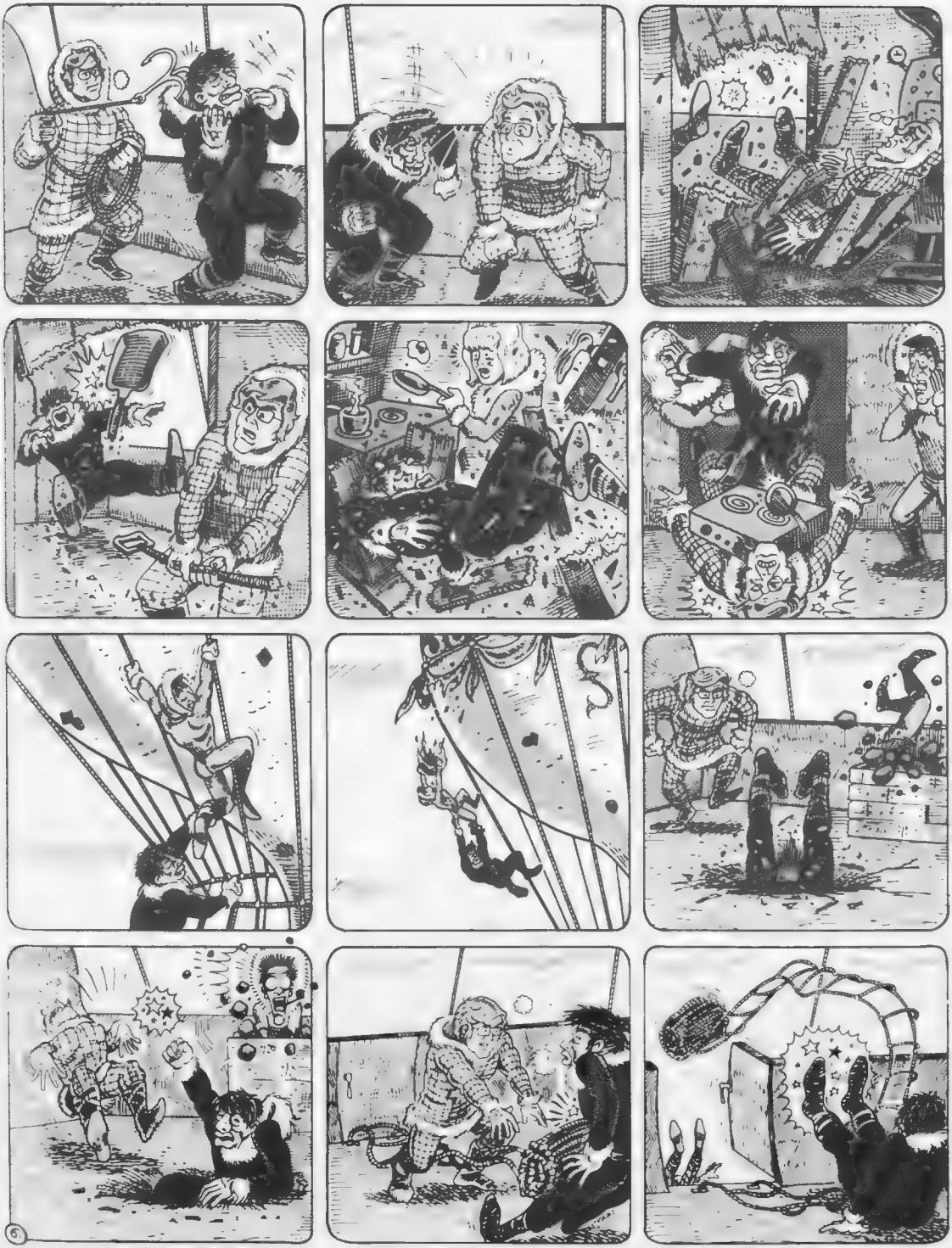
LII-SNOOKUMS GET WHAT HE WANT.
KLOW!

S...SNOOKY, SWEETHEART! WH—WHATCHA' DOIN' THERE, KIDDO?! PUT THE POWER BACK ON THE SHELF, BUBBY!

TIRED OF LISTEN TO YOU, SEAL BREATH. YOU LEAVE ONE'S BALLOON NOW.
HAR HAR! SNOOKY, YOU RASCAL. FUN'S FUN - BUT YOU STOP KIDDIN' AROUND, AND I PROMISE I WON'T GET MAD.

HALP!

HUNGH!
YANK!

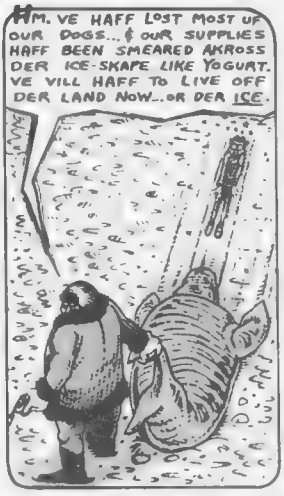


EEEEEEK!
LANCEY! LANCEY!

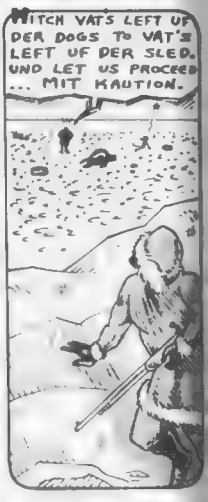
HAH! I GOT YOU!
GOT YOU!

GOTT YOU!
GOTT YOU! VERDAMDT MONSTERS! HA...DEY SUFFERED DEARLY FOR DE DAMAGE DEY HAFF KAUSED. I PARED DEIR RANKS KONSIDERABLY!

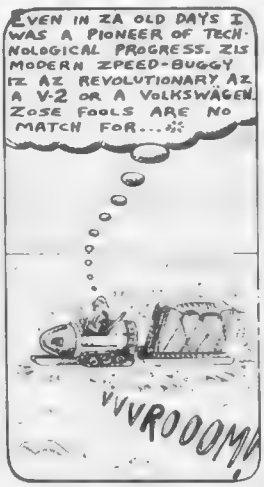
YES PROFESSOR, BUT PLEASE - GET THIS FILTHY BEAST OFF ME! HIS HEALTH HABITS ARE DOUBTLESSLY ATROCIOUS! AND I'M CERTAIN HE HAD SOMETHING SIMPLY HIDEOUS FOR BRUNCH!


HM. VE HAFF LOST MOST UF OUR DOGS... & OUR SUPPLIES HAFF BEEN SMEARED AKROSS DER ICE-SKAPE LIKE YOGURT. VE VILL HAFF TO LIVE OFF DER LAND NOW...OR DER ICE.

DER NOISE DAT TRIGGERED PER STAMPEDE MAY HAFF SIMPLY BEEN AN EXPANDING ICE-FLOE KRACKING... BUT I SUSPEKT UDDERWISE. SEVERAL TIMES I'VE TOT I GLIMPSED A FIGURE ON DER HORIZON. VE ARE RACING SOMEVUN UDDER DAN CHUST HERR PERTVILLABY.


MITCH VAT'S LEFT UF DER DOGS TO VAT'S LEFT UF DER SLED. UND LET US PROCEED ... MIT KAUTION.

IT WILL DO YOU NO GOOD, OLD FREUND. I HAVE MANAGED TO ZLOW YOU AND YOUR IMPERFECT COMPANION DOWN TO A SNAIL'S PACE. NOW ZERE IS VERY LIDDLE TO CHALLENGE MY SNOW-MOBILE IN ZIS CONTENTION.

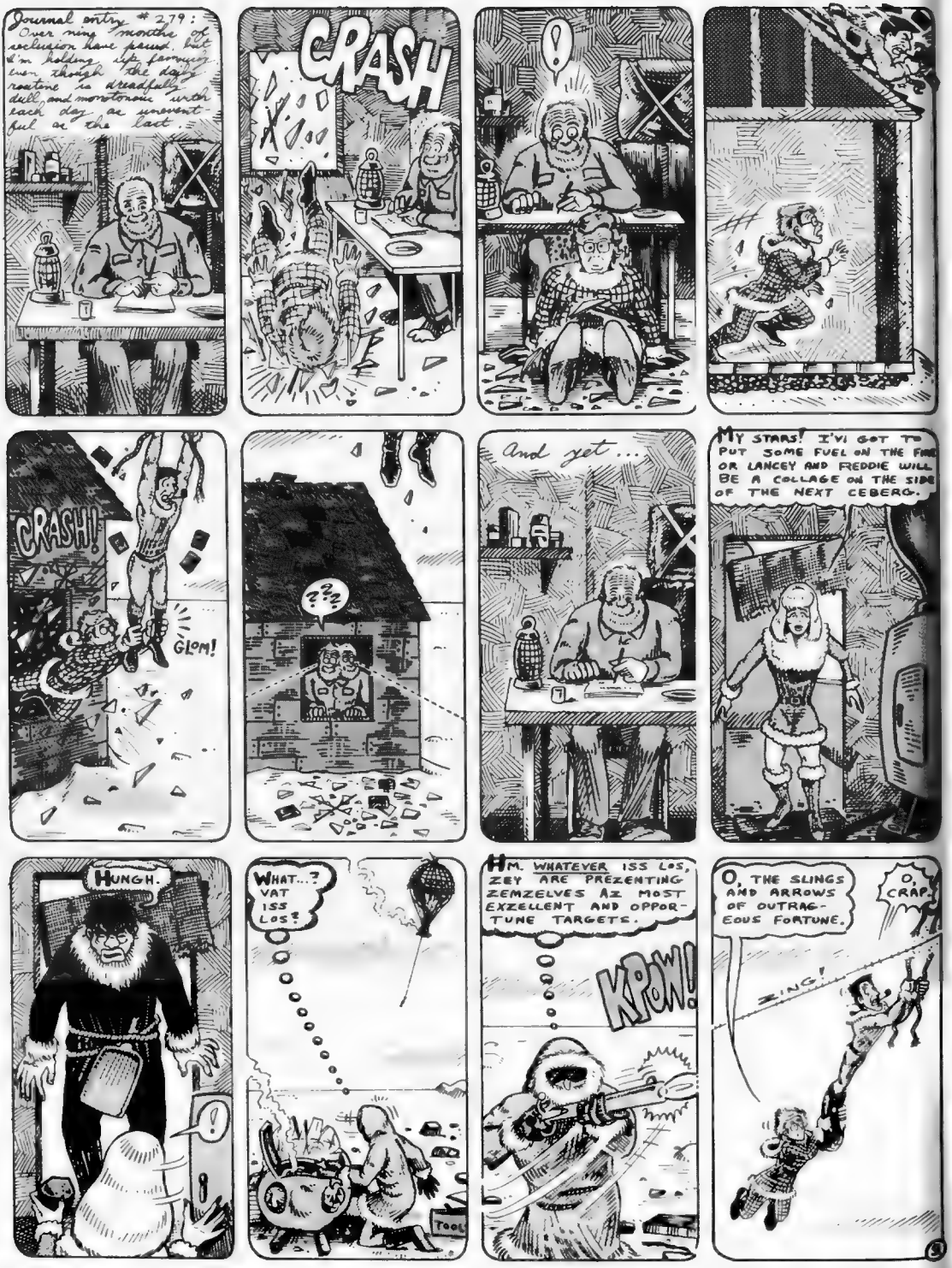

EVEN IN ZA OLD DAYS I WAS A PIONEER OF TECHNOLOGICAL PROGRESS. ZIS MODERN ZPEED-BUGGY IZ AZ REVOLUTIONARY AZ A V-2 OR A VOLKSWAGEN. ZOSE FOOLS ARE NO MATCH FOR...
VVVROOOM!

WHAT THE...
KRACK!

!
FLOOP!

?
I HATE YOU.

OH, PICKLES?
HUNGH. ONE NEED YOU LIKE AIR-COOLED IGLOO. YOU GO GOOD BYE-BYE.
YAAAAAA!
HUNGH. ONE WILL FIND "ART" STUFF BY SELF. BE LOTS RICH. GO FAIRBANKS. MAKE PLENTY LAUGH.
CHEEKY LITTLE DEVIL, ISN'T HE?
DAMN STRAIGHT.
HUGH. WE NOT HAVE TO WAT TILL REACH "ART" AT NORTH POLE PLACE. ONI WILL LAUGH WITH BOSS' WOMAN NOW...
YOU'D BETTER KEEP YOUR HANDS AND STUFF TO YOURSELF, BUSTER.
CHONK!
HUUNGHH!!!
WHAT'S HAPPENING TOPSIDE?
HEH, HEH... I BELIEVE LIL-SNOOKUMS JUST HAD THE FAMILY JEWELS REAPPRAISED.
LANCEY! I CAN'T PULL UP THE TWO OF YOU! YOU'LL HAFTA' CLIMB BACK UP! HURRY!
HUUUNNNGGH. ONE IS DYING. ONE IS DYING.
THE UNTENDED FURNACE IS GOING OUT. WE'RE SWEEPING DOWN TOWARD THE ICE. DON'T FALL OFF, FREDDIE - THERE'S NO WAY TO RETRIEVE ANY FLOTSAM OR JETSAM, HUMAN OR OTHERWISE.
HUUNNGH. ONE NOT LIKE TO LAUGH WITH YOUR WOMAN, BOSS. ... SHE HAVE WEIRD SENSE OF HUMOR!
LANCE-BOY! LOOK OUT!
UNITED STAT
WEATHER ST
8


Journal entry #279: Over nine months of exclusion have passed, but I'm holding up fairly well. Even though the daily routine is dreadfully dull and monotonous with each day as uneventful as the last.
CRASH
!
CRASH!
GLOM!
???
And yet...
MY STARS! I'VE GOT TO PUT SOME FUEL ON THE FIRE OR LANCEY AND FREDDIE WILL BE A COLLAGE ON THE SIDE OF THE NEXT CEBERG.
HUNGH.
!
WHAT...? VAT ISS LOS?
FOOL
HM. WHATEVER ISS LOS, ZEY ARE PREZENTING ZEMZELVES AZ MOST EXZELLENT AND OPPORTUNE TARGETS.
KPOW!
O, THE SLINGS AND ARROWS OF OUTRAGEOUS FORTUNE.
O, CRAP.
ZING!
9

OH OH... I ZINK RUDE NOIZES ARE DISTAZTFUL TO ZA NATIVES...
PULL, YOU FLEA-BITTEN KUR! YOU AREN'T TRYING! PULL, OR I SHALL FLAGELLATE YOU TO WITHIN A MILLIMETER OF YOUR KANINE LIFE!
CRAK CRAK
FREDDIE, THAT ICE PACK IS AS HARD AS CONCRETE, AND I PERCEIVE LITTLE HOPE OF SALVATION—THERE ISN'T A LLAMA OR AWNING IN SIGHT.
SOG
GET BACK! GET BACK!
HUNGH. WOMAN WASTING GOOD EQUIPMENT...
STOVE KEROSENE
CLUNK
HUNGH. PLEASE TO TELL ONE THAT LAST CAN THROWN DID NOT LAND IN WHAT ONE THINKS IT LANDED IN...
POP
SPUT
SPIT
THONK THUNK
KLUDGE!
BANG-BONG-SPLAT!
10.

*

* THE PROVERBIAL PREGNANT PAUSE CATCH YOUR BREATH, REGRESS MOMENTARILY, AND TRY TO MAKE SENSE OUT OF THE LAST 3 PAGES!

AND NOW, BACK TO THE GRATUITOUS VIOLENCE IN THIS, OUR TOKEN "MINDLESS-ACTION-&-LITTLE-PLOT" EPISODE.

?

WOMP!

HUNGH. WHAT HAPPEN TO GIRLS JUST LIKE GIRL THAT MARRY DEAR OLD DAD...

ELSEWHERE:

STATE FAIR

OH DEAR... THE LOSS OF THE GONDOLA AND THAT BLAST OF SUPER-HEATED AIR HAS SENT ME HIGH INTO THE STRATOSPHERE. EVENTUALLY, THE AIR WILL COOL AND THE BALLOON WILL BEGIN TO DROP... THEN WHAT?

STILL ELSEWHERE:

OH! I'M SO UPSET WITH ZAT WHALE!

TOOLS

AND ELSEWHERE YET:

VELL, DOT'S IT FOR OUR LAST HUSKIE. GRUNT. GERMAN SHEPHERDS VOULD NOT HAFF KAVED IN LIKE DIS SORRY DOG-TEAM.

PROFESSOR! WHAT...? WHAT HAPPENED? THIS ... THING THAT FELL OUT OF THE SKY! IT'S THE PRODUCT OF SOME INTELLIGENT LIFE FORM!

GOOD LORD! IT'S A "WALRUS OF THE GODS"!!!

STRUDLE-HEAD! DON'T YOU REMEMBER HERR PERTVILLABY'S BALLOON GONDOLA? DIS FIGURE-HEAD VAS KAST HERE BY SOME AIR-BORNE EXPLOSION SEFERAL MILES DISTANT. IT VOULD SEEM HERR PERTVILLABY HAS MET HIS MAKER. SO SAD.

STILL MORE ELSEWHERE

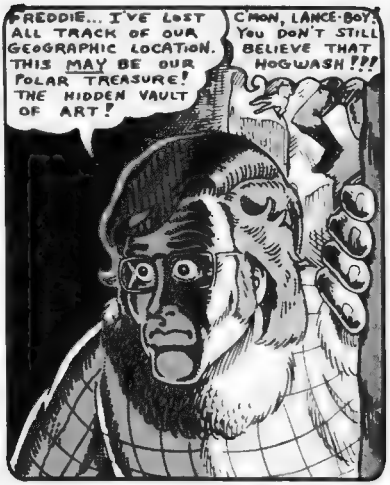
OH.

GREAT SCOTT! I CAN'T SEE! I CAN'T SEE! I'VE GONE SNOW-BLIND! O, MISERY! O, ANGUISH! ALL IS LOST! I'M DOOMED!!!

HERE, LANCE-BOY... YOU JUST LOST YOUR SPECS.

OH. WELL THAT'S VERY DIFFERENT, ISN'T IT? NEVER MIND.

WHAT BROKE OUR FALL ANYHOW?
WE APPARENTLY BURST THROUGH THE SNOW LAYER INTO SOME SORT OF CAVITY. QUITE A STROKE OF GOOD FORTUNE, I MUST SAY. BUT LET'S INVESTIGATE THIS.


FREDDIE... I'VE LOST ALL TRACK OF OUR GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION. THIS MAY BE OUR POLAR TREASURE! THE HIDDEN VAULT OF ART!
C'MON, LANCE-BOY! YOU DON'T STILL BELIEVE THAT HOGWASH?!?!

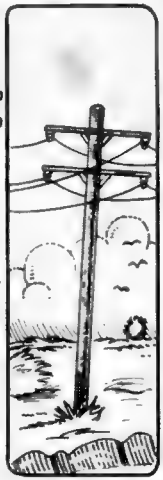
NO- WAIT! THIS ISN'T THE TREASURE TROVE. I FEEL SOME SORT OF INSTRUMENTS... DIALS... SEATS... FREDDIE! THIS IS INCREDIBLE! IF WE'VE STUMBLED ONTO WHAT I THINK WE HAVE, ALL IS NOT YET LOST! COME — HELP ME EXCAVATE THIS FROM THE DECADES OF SNOWFALL.
?

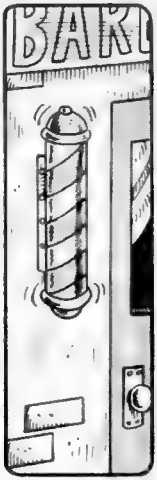
HUNGH. BOSS IS ALL DEAD. BUT ONE IS OLD ARCTIC SCOUT— WILL STILL GET TO NORTH POLE PLACE, FIND "ART" STUFF, AND PAINT FAIRBANKS WHITE.
GIDDAMUP!

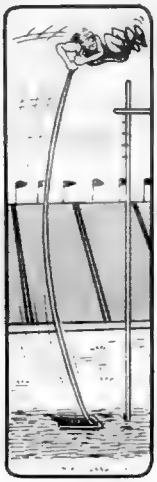
PULL, YOU MISERABLE WRETCH! YOU AREN'T TRYING! PULL, OR I SHALL FLAGELLATE YOU TO WITHIN A MILLIMETER OF YOUR VORTHLESS LIFE!
CRAK
CRAK
WHINNE

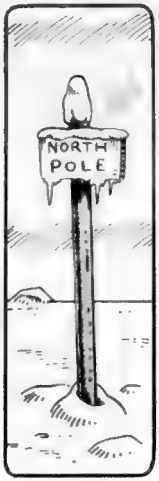
NEXT EPISODE:

AT LONG LAST, WE'LL DISCOVER THE SECRET HELD BY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING; CAN YOU GUESS WHICH ONE?!

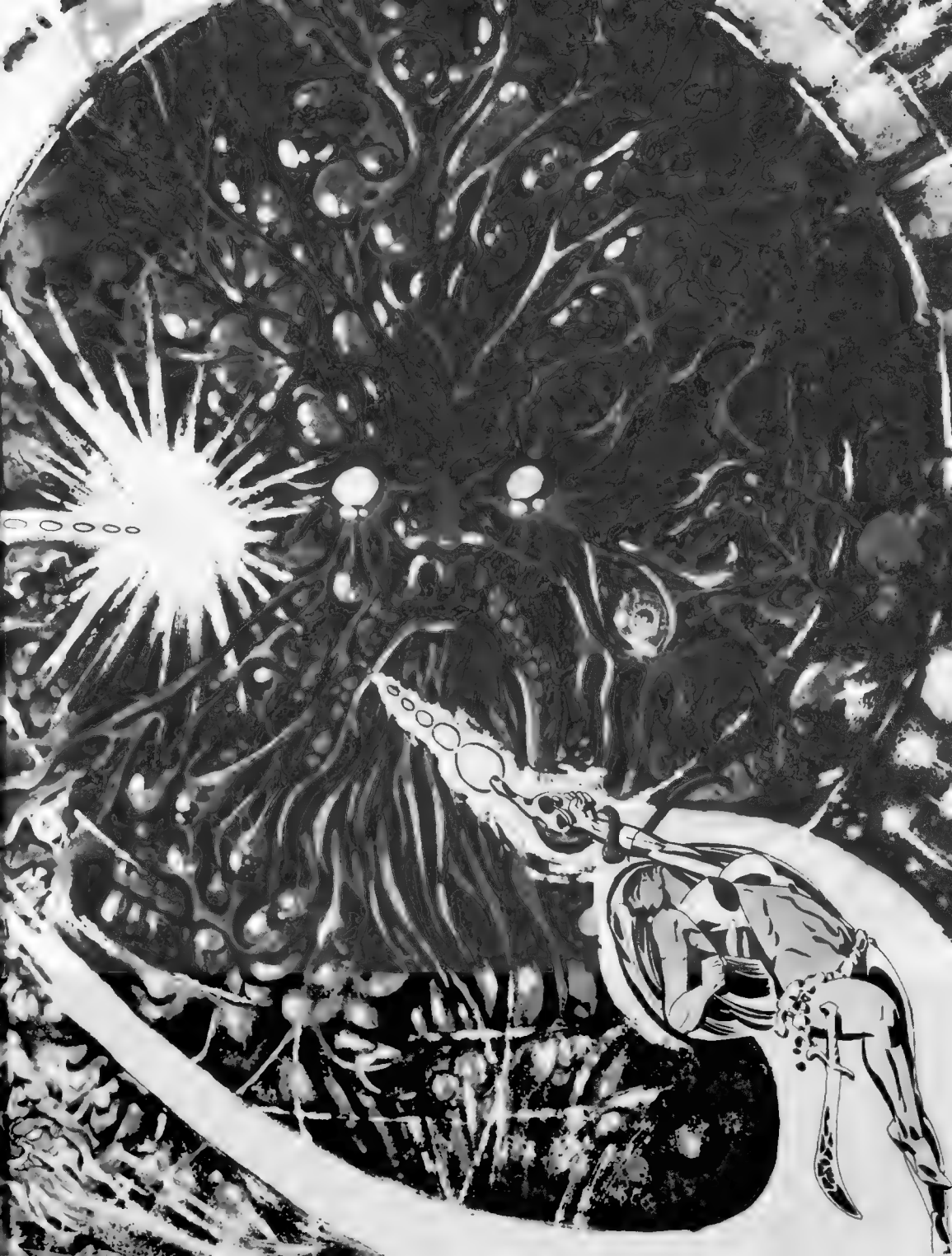








BY DON ROSA



Adam Strange occupies a special niche in my world of panelology. It was eleven years ago, in RBCC #55 that I had my first article published. The title? "Adam Strange - The Thinking Man's Super Hero". Three pages that are as timely today as they were back then. So with my editor's permission, I'd like to reprint it with some updating and a new lead in...

ADAM STRANGE: THE THINKING MAN'S SUPER HERO

BY HOWARD P. SIEGEL

If Adam Strange wore a "double bobber" instead of a fin topped helmet, and a walking cape instead of a propulsion pack, he could have easily been authored by Sir A. Conan Doyle instead of my Yonkers neighbor Gar Fox. Both he and Sherlock Holmes had the same strengths and they were mental, not physical. The ability to deduce, analyze and comprehend. The unknowns did not frighten nor mystify them, for they were too disciplined for that. Why was Adam an instant hero? He brought to a new world and to new people abilities that were alien to them. On Earth, a combination of heredity, acquired talent and the training of an archeologist were the legacies he took with him to Rann. Unlike the people he championed, he could "see the forest for the trees." The technology, although advanced in comparison to that of his native planet, was comprehendable. It was all too new for him to be any other way but curious and investigative. There were times when he was just too unconventional by the usual super hero standards. And perhaps that was what made him so popular with readers. He was different. He also had top talent handling him during his first run heyday...Infantino, Anderson and the aforementioned Fox.

It all began in 1958, the November issue of Showcase to be exact. Seventeen by issue number, and smack in the middle of an industry transition. The Marvel Age was three years away, costumed adventurers were feeling out the buying public for acceptance and a hopeful future. Golden Age formuli in new dress, familiar names, proven themes. Three tryouts followed by a six year career in MYSTERY IN SPACE which many collectors still consider one of the best titles of that time. From it, and companion piece STRANGE ADVENTURES came stories that have received excellent reviews even when reprinted for a new audience. Elsewhere in this special issue is no doubt mentioned the zeta beam, the 25 trillion mile journey to the Star Sun Alpha Centauri and the triple sunned, green sky planet known as Rann. Of Alanna, then the flop skirted girlfriend, today the leotard garbed wife. It wasn't until his second career that Adam's existence became overcomplicated no thanks to father-in-law/scientist Sardath and new writers who sought to fit him into JLA guest shots and a revived STRANGE ADVENTURES short run. More about that disappointment later. One of the unexplained mysteries was his acquisition of the now famous red, orange and white costume. Unlike Green Lantern, we know little of Adam's space ship benefactor. And unlike a predecessor, Captain Comet, the editors had the good sense not to mangle his appearance.

The covers of MYSTERY IN SPACE were excellent, several winning awards. The stories scored well too. Many becoming nominees or winners in several fan contests, topped by issue No. 75, "The Planet That Came To A Standstill", No. 82, "World War On Earth - And Rann", and No. 90, "Planets In Peril". In 1962 No. 75 won the Alley Award for best full length story. It featured Kanjar Ro, the alien villain with the handleless strainers for eyes who first plagued the J.L.A. with his slave ship of space in the third issue of their title, and was to come back again in 1975 and 1976 with Adam as the guest star. In the 1963 polls, MYSTERY IN SPACE won the award for best interior color work, which is ironic by virtue of the fact that reprinted stories in the revived STRANGE ADVENTURES in 1969 and 1970 were altered in a disappointing fashion. To the collector-detective who looks for such things, it would be evident that greens became blues, reds became yellows and greys became blacks. Then in 1968's balloting, Adam Strange was the strip most desired for revival. A tribute to the impact he made. Further evidence of his potency in the sales charts, retrogressing somewhat, was the three issue series (Nos. 87 to 90) in which Hawkman shared MIS with "Earth's First Space Explorer". Once and for all, the DC editors were determined to make Hawkman a winner, so after two BRAVE & BOLD tryouts, they showcased him with Adam, and it worked. Soon after, the winged policeman from Thanagar enjoyed a 27 issue solo run, Adam Strange guesting in Nos. 18 and 19.

With super heroes in full swing, one would think that the editors would be satisfied with a successful strip; but as has happened too many times in the past, assignment switches have led to deterioration of a character. Adam was not immune. His loyal followers were stricken by the cover of issue No. 92 (June, 1964). Instead of the familiar costumed adventurer, Space Ranger appeared. And inside the famous Infantino art was replaced by that of Lee Elias, whose credits included that super-spelunker, Cave Carson who taxi-squaded between BRAVE & BOLD and SHOWCASE and the feature that occupied the main slot when MIS was cancelled, Ultra, The Multi-Alien. To further cause anguish, Elias took away the red and white fin topped helmet that was the salient point of Adam's uniform. To the observant, it marked the beginning of the end, and seemingly without justification. He alternated in the

-ad story with The Ranger, missed No. 101 and the
-xt issue was the last he appeared in (No. 102, Sept.
-. Perhaps it was for the best. His handling was
. Inferiority was evident toward the end.

It was 1966. Batman was an overnight sensation on
-year T.V. A whole new generation of readers was
eveloped along with a merchandising explosion. Man-
-er was shifted to concentrate on the exploitation of
the Caped Crusader. Other stable mainliners were short
-rifted. But the spectre of Rann's champion would not
away. The zeta beam carried him from the African
eldt, the Sargasso Sea or the Australian outback onto
-- walls of the conference room at 909 Third Avenue in
ew York City by virtue of the letters that poured in
-nsistently. In 1970 National Periodicals threw the
.S. aficionados a bone via a teamup with Batman in
B No: 90 with the long time team of Andru and Espo-
ito handling the art, Bob Haney the scripting. But
any of us had become spoiled by the MIS quality, and
-mehow Adam Strange, regardless of the fact that he
-re his uniform of old, did not seem the same. The
foremention ed J.L.A. appearances followed, with Nos.
0 and 121 resulting in the altering of Adam's body
emistry and the negative effects of the zeta radia-
-on so that he could permanently stay on Rann and
-bsequently marry Alanna. Prior to that STRANGE AD-
-NTURES came back, with the 217th issue, sporting a
-eal Adams cover and a reprint of the first story from
WCASE No. 17 which by that time was priced in the
verstreet Guide at $15.00. Thereafter a new audience
-- treated to selected early Infantino-Sachs art and
-k stories from MYSTERY IN SPACE. The sixth issue of
the series gave readers a new adventure by the team of
Neil, Kane & Anderson and only made us thirst for

DC
MYSTERY IN SPACE
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
MAR. NO. 92
MY NATIVE PLANET EARTH--AND MY ADOPTED PLANET RANN EACH IN DEADLY PERIL! THERE'S ONLY TIME FOR
WORLD WAR
EARTH and RANN!

more, but we were to be denied. A picture story in No. 226 was not enough. The Atomic Knights reprints took over thereafter, and once again Adam was put into limbo.

What made him so unique? At the beginning of this article I explained that his non-superpowered modus operandi was the answer. Here are a few examples taken from his career highlights:

Threatened by a giant robot controlled by a renegade ex-ruler, the people of Rann are about to surrender when Adam Strange returns from what was almost a watery grave. With Alanna's assistance Adam captures the villain, but the latter refuses to reveal how he controls the robot and continues to keep his stranglehold on the populace despite his internment. Adam finds the control mechanism hidden under the hairpiece of the deposed ruler, and explains, "Avanar Bar cut off his hair to fashion a wig to conceal his remote control device. In doing so, he naturally parted his hair on the customary left side while it was in front of him. But when he put it on, the part was on the right side. I noticed the discrepency in an old picture when he was ruler years ago. The rest was easy to figure out." Shades of Sherlock!

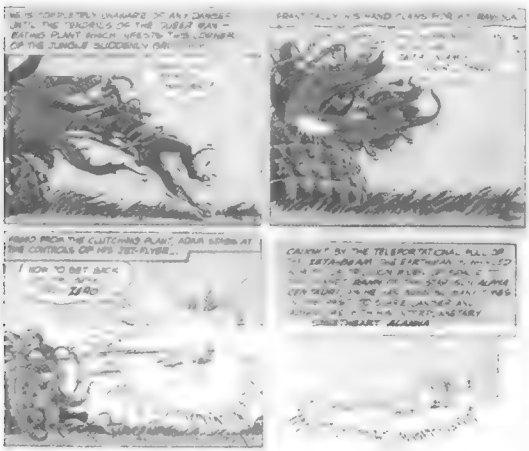
In "Vengence of the Dust Devil", a nine page adventure in which the whirling menace followed Adam to Earth, the dialogue went like this: "Wait! I'm getting an idea! When I rubbed my glass gun on the silk shirt of my uniform, the Dust Devil was frozen motionless. Hmm...glass barrel, silk uniform. Of course! I created a field of static electricity!" The purchase of a Wimshurst machine at a science shop in Melbourne, Australia did away with the adversary as he touched the civilian garbed Earthling. An unusual set of circumstances in that Adam battled the Dust Devil on Rann, made his discovery there, and finished him off on his native planet while in his alter ego role of archeologist.

As a final example, issue No. 73 of MIS had a double length story in which Rann's "Champion of Champions" did combat with "The Invisible Raiders of Rann". An invasion by alien space ships, manned by soldiers seemingly bodiless, was on the verge of being successful until Adam entered the lead ship and discovered an energy entity was the guiding factor of the empty uniforms. Said being it turns out, was an exiled scientist cum dictator from another world whose pernicious manner to conquer took him to the third planet of the star sun Alpha Centauri. And how did Adam quell the threat? By grabbing the energy being as the zeta beam was wearing off, thus transporting them both to Earth. There, the villain was rendered forever inert, with this reasoning: "Ever since I first went to Rann, I began studying the star we call Alpha Centauri. Here on Earth I learned it was actually a member of a triple star system - three suns revolving

around one another. I learned there were other triple suns in the universe too. Zeta Cancri, Xi Scorpi, Omega Eridani and others. When you pointed to your home star system, I recognized Zeta Cancri, a triple sun! Since you told me that your kind of life was inert under the rays of different suns...I reasoned that Earth's single sun would be the one weapon which would prove to be your downfall."

Nominated by The Flash in J.L.A. No. 4 for membership, he turned down the honor, not wanting to be miscast in such elite company where he could only contribute brain power. After all, wasn't Batman the "World's Greatest Detective?" Another "whodunnit" solver was unnecessary. Be that as it may, Adam Strange faced a wide assortment of foes! A two headed sea monster with "sizzling blue eyes", square headed invaders that dissolved people with a vacuumizer, a gigantic radioactive blob, war machines with flexible talons and stilt like legs (see the cover of this RBCC), monstrous fireflies, a globe headed magi that turned beings into a crystalline state, a giant ray gun, deadly shadows of himself, cloud creatures, runaway rockets, underworld giants, and robots housing ghostly entities. He fought on ocean bottoms, in underground cities, on neighboring planets. And yet, there were times when he could be considered a tragic figure. In "World War On Earth and Rann", after saving both his native and adopted planet, the adventure concluded with Adam exclaiming, "How ironic that I am a worldwide hero on Rann -- yet here on my own world I am an unknown, unsung hero!" Add to that the sadistic zeta beam, which always managed to wear off just as Adam and Alanna were about to enjoy each other's company after an extremely perilous adventure. "It seems I always arrive on Rann in time to face a new menace", he once expounded, as if to wonder whether he was the victim of some almighty being's playful whimsy. Yet he was to be idolized on Rann centuries after his time, with little children wearing his red, white & orange uniform and playing "Adam Strange", and ancestors attempting to follow his legacy, as did one with Space Ranger.

When one thinks of the "good old days" of comic books, certainly our subject ranks high on the list of the prime examples of the quality of the 12¢ and 15¢ periods.



ABOVE SEQUENCE FROM "MYSTERY IN SPACE" #65, 1961.

Artwork in this Adam Strange section which is new is by Mike Zeck (page 43), Tom Sutton (pages 44, 46 and the centerspread), and Hilary Barta.

The centerspread and page 44 are full color paintings which are for sale from Tom Sutton for $75.00 (page 44) and $100.00 (centerspread). His b&w drawing on page 46 is $15.00. The paintings are much larger than printed size. Tom's address is in his ad elsewhere this issue.

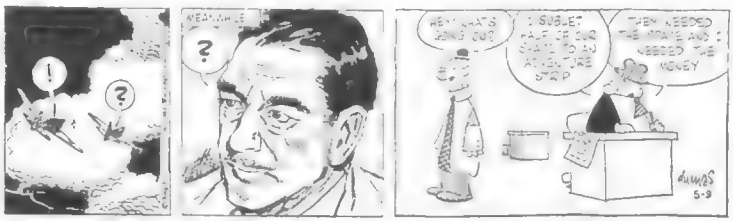
COMIC COLLECTOR'S COMMENTS

BY HOWARD P. SIEGEL

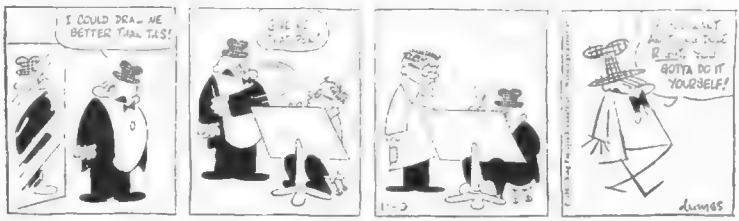
SAM'S STRIP

Perhaps it was ahead of its time. It catered to a specialized readership and never appeared in more than [illegible] papers in its three year career. Nevertheless, Sam's Strip has a definite, albeit a social niche in comic strip history. It was a two dimensional, pictorial parody on its contemporaries and the industry which served it in general. The brainchild of both Jerry Dumas, [illegible] Walker's long time associate (assistant is not apropos if you've read "[illegible] The Strips") and Beetle Bailey's creator. Before going into the history of Sam's Strip, a word about Jerry Dumas, who put himself into the strip several times): [illegible], married with three boys and a nearby resident (nearby the Walker [illegible] and the Museum of Cartoon Art that is) of Greenwich, Jerry can paint a renaissance oil as easily as a single panel cartoon for The New Yorker. As a writer he has done children's books, serious pieces for national magazines such as Harper's and Holiday, with some winners at the BB Monday morning meetings. [illegible] spectacled, ofttimes in there with the zanny cartoonist's wacky trips on one another, and a first rate family man, I've often [illegible] that only the existence of Mort has kept Jerry from trying to do his own strip. And he would be the finest one to tell me to add lack of a commercial [illegible], laziness, and too much enjoyment of his present mode of living as others. Make that I both right!

It wasn't easy to sell King Features on Sam's Strip. It was unconventional, oft times incensed things that were, don't ask why, taboo; and certain panels that were subject to disapproval by the Legal Department. Of the [illegible] original submissions only 6 met the then stringent requirements of the trade. Nevertheless, KF gave it a go ahead, with Dumas doing most of the work, Walker contributing gags and handling the lettering. In the samples that follow, you'll note that Sam rented out part of his strip to an adventure comic that needed more room; held his own comic characters convention; gave Krazy Kat and company a hard time; watched the little people go to an elevator shoe sale; and had a good part [illegible] close friends of comicland. Sam, oft times pompous, always a braggard and not adverse to criticizing his creator, garnered a cult of his own much the way Thurber (Mr.) Herriman did. Completely unusual, for the collector and comic-ist, Sam's Strip is unique.....

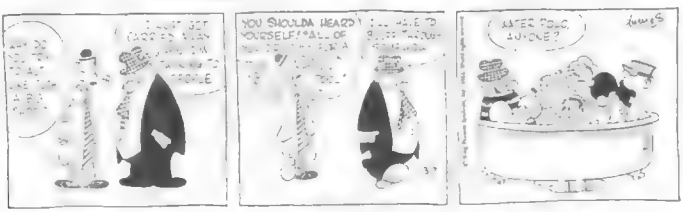


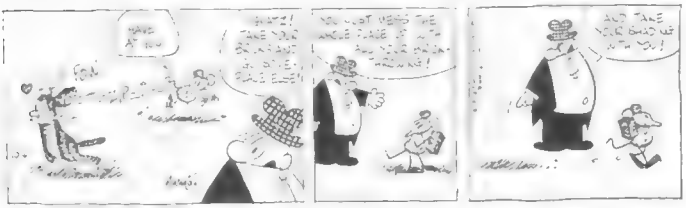
I HAVE AN ANNOUNCEMENT TO MAKE
THE HOTEL WANTS ME TO REMIND YOU THAT THE CUSTARD PIES BEING SERVED ARE FOR EATING
dumas
COMIC CHARACTERS CONVENTION

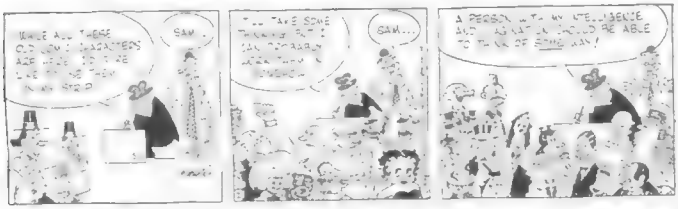


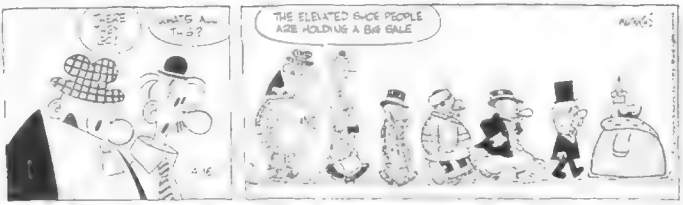
NO, WHY SHOULD I SIGN THIS? I'M THE ONLY ONE WHAT THROWS A BRICK. I'M NOT WORRIED ABOUT YOU.
WHERE?

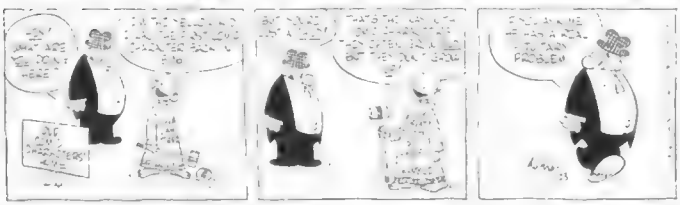
SHE'S BEEN CALLING ALL THE OTHER STRIPS


YOU SHOULDA HEARD YOURSELF ALL OF
AFTER DOING ANYONE?


AND TAKE YOUR BRAD WITH YOU!


WHILE ALL THESE OLD COMIC CHARACTERS ARE RETIRING TO THE OLD STRIP HOME
A PERSON WITH AN INTELLIGENCE ABOVE AVERAGE SHOULD BE ABLE TO THINK OF SOME WAY!


THE ELEVATED SHOE PEOPLE ARE HOLDING A BIG SALE

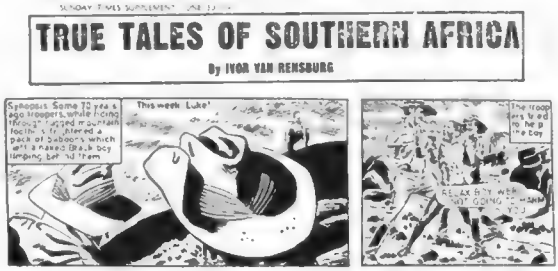

PROBLEM

Jules Feiffer admitted it in his "The Great Comic Book Heroes"; and at one time or other we've all created our own costumed adventurers in a style we were sure would put the best of the pro artists to shame. In the early sixties when hundreds of self proclaimed publishers offered ditto'ed fanzines, their roles as editors, artist and writer allowed them to sell such material. Thank the Lord that offset had not yet come in vogue, else the renditions would have been truly worse than they appeared to be. However, it's all part of panelology, so here then are some sterling examples of super heroes that the fans of yesteryear created, with much enthusiasm, love and thought:

SPLANG!
...A GENTLE BREEZE- A SUDDEN CHILL- AND HE WAS THERE- IN THE MIDST OF EVIL — THE DARK AND STRANGELY GARBED AVENGER - KNOWN ONLY AS
The ZEPHYR
IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF
THE KOMIX
The ZEPHYR

And when a contest was run to determine which of MLJ's/Harvey's Shields were the best, readers were also invited to send in their versions. Ronn Foss, one of the more talented fan artists of the day contributed these two ideas:

And here is a newspaper strip from South Africa:


TRUE TALES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA
By IVOR VAN RENSBURG
Synopsis: Some 70 years ago troopers, while riding through a legend mountain foothills, filtered a pack of baboons which left a naked Black boy limping, but not from
This week: Luke!
The troopers tried to help the boy
RELAX BOY WE'RE NOT GOING

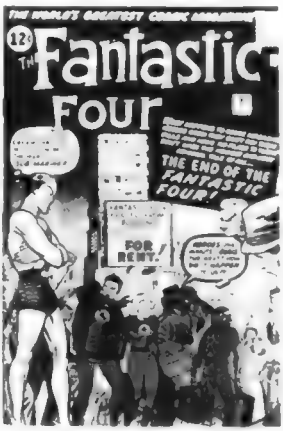
I asked John Cullen Murphy what the future held for Prince Valiant in the years to come. Actually I was fishing for a clue as to what course "Jack" would take once Hal Foster passed on and the world famous strip would be under his sole direction. It was suggested that "I go upstairs and find out for myself. The plan was laid some 30 years ago". "Upstairs" meant the second floor of The Museum of Cartoon Art, where some research material is already cataloged. Sure enough, in one of the P.V. books was the answer: Prince Valiant would some day grow past his prime and Prince Arn would become wielder of the Singing Sword. I also photocopied two other significant panels which are historically pertinent:

FIRST APPEARANCE of Prince Valiant (right) on February 13, 1937, shown with his father, the deposed King of Thule, and his mother. Prince Valiant has grown considerably since that time.

TWO MOMENTOUS events in the life of Prince Valiant. One June 12, 1937 he received (left) the famous "Singing Sword" from his friend and rival, Prince Arn. On August 31, 1947 his first son and heir, whose first portrait is shown right, was born and named Prince Arn after his old friend. Prince Arn is now entering his teens and eventually will become the hero of the strip.

And finally, I was struck by the appearance of Prince Namor as he was shown on the cover of Fantastic Four #9. This Kirby rendition is a far cry from the Sub-Mariner of today. The F.F. were, in those days, the banner carriers of the Marvel line. Spidey had not yet reached his heights of popularity.

NOTE: I enjoyed putting this little pictorial piece together. If you'd like more, let me know.



Science Fiction buffs consider Superworld Comics No. 1 the closest thing to the pulps in comic book form. Not only was it Hugo Gernsback's only entry into this media, but it contained a cover by Frank R. Paul's famous alien who appeared in many of his illustrations in the same basic design. Example: "The Martian", Science Fiction Plus, March, 1953. The title lasted 3 issues, with two more in the make-ready stage before Gernsback cancelled the venture.

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algia are the governing reasons for a new format that has been appearing on overseas newstands for the last few years. Not new, but more polished, these slick presentations are a throwback to the Sunday newspapers of early post-WWII England. Photostories, text and comics, some in color, some in black and white, all contained in the same paper. They still exist, especially in Australia, but that's a story for the annual John Ryan/Howard Siegel "History of Australian Comics" which will be the feature of my next column. The closest thing we have to the comic art section is the Warren product, rich in watercolor and expert printing. On the international marketplace, publishers are not tied to one syndicate, hence a single issue of a magazine can combine any combination of strips from the 30s, 40s, and so on with current material. Most range from our standard letter size (8 ½ X 11) to large periodical size (10 X 12) with a few isolated German and Spanish magazines in digest (7 X 9 or 10) to such as Aventuras which featured pirated EC material to several 12 X 14 specials printed in Stockholm and distributed by W. Verlag GMBH, the house that handles the German version of Mad Magazine and others. So much for the mathematics.

To illustrate via word picture, the magazine-comic, I'll use two 1975 examples, published in French for those Wuropean countries in which that language is spoken. The first, a one-shot special is titles "Les Merveilleuses Aventures Daktari" - The Marvelous Adventures of Daktari, taken of course from the Ivan Tors' TV and movie creation. Actually the art was done in 1972 and the credit indicia on the last page would put this piece into the catagory of being part of an unscheduled series. The stories, in order of appearance are:

Cover: panels from the Daktari story done by Sielobre in watercolor.
Inside frontspiece: a 1959 Peanuts Sunday page.
A photo and text on the African lion follows.
An anagram-like puzzle.
12 pages (two stories) of Daktari done in watercolor from stats licensed by Western Publishing.
Another puzzle page, or pages since it includes several photo and cartoon sections.
Inside backpiece: An undated, uncredited Popeye, definitely an unlicensed piece.
Back cover: Solutions to the puzzles and a half page of Dick Cavalli's Winthrop.

Although the next example is titled "Le Journal De Mickey", it is not all Disney. Its features include an 8 page Donald Duck story, single pages featuring Mickey, The Katzenjammer Kids, two pages of Flash Gordon, two of Grandma Duck, two of the French Sherrif Matt in watercolor, four more of Donald, a single page of Hagar The Horrible, three puzzle pages, a photostory of a carnival, four assorted pages of games and ouzzles plus ads for the Mattel Barbie Doll, two more of a Mickey short piece, two of Leo Baxendale's Archibald (a French character), two pages of Lyman Young's Tim Tyler's Luck, seven pages of Disney's Lovebug movie, two pages of Mandrake the Magician, a Snuffy Smith single, and in between ads for other pagazines, a few more commercials and fillers featuring Mickey. All done on slick paper, excellent printing and, to say the least, a variety of material. I believe it's a monthly issuance.

In the United States, schoolastic publications such as Dynamite are quite close to the above described format. Walt Disney Magazine even more so. Whether our major comic book publishers will follow suit is doubtful. Economics forbid it without sacrificing page count. Distributors will fuss and fume because Marvel and DC plus the others will be giving them a product that looks like standard magazines and invite confusion. What will dealers do with the retail racks now sized for normal comic books?

Living near New York City, with all of the large magazine shops located in strategic places where great volumes of transients pass by, obtaining foreign publications is not too difficult. In fact, I paid $1.50 for a plastic bagged package containing the two aforementioned magazines together with a Belgium publication and two French coloring books. It's a matter of seek and find. For English material I rely upon my good friend, oft times called "Digger" or "Uncle Bidgee" or "The Man From Down Under", John Ryan. He and I will do, as also noted elsewhere, a sketchy summary of the slick nagazine in which the commerical aspects and "gimmickry" are more prevalent.

-*-*-*

by LARRY BIGMAN

FORMERLY "THE WILLIAMSON COLLECTOR"
RATING SCALE 1 to 5

In honor of one of the all-time greats in comic book illustration returning to the field, this installment of the EC Collector is concerned solely with the work of Wallace Wood.

CAPTAIN SCIENCE #1 - November, 1950
"The Monster God of Rogor" - 7 pages

"The Monster God of Rogor" is one of Wood's early EC period, non-EC stories done for the Youthful Magazines comic company. The story concerns an anthropologist's journey into the past via a strange crystal covered with hieroglyphics. He ends up as a race's savior in their battle against the Rogors. The secret of his success lies in the same type of crystals as the original. Of course, the good guy wins, but loses his lady love at the last moment as he is teleported back to his time. He vows at the end to find another crystal and return to his love Maryl. It's really a decent adventure story, long on atmosphere and action and short on characterization.

Wood's art is very nice, resembling more his work of the sixties than his EC work, insofar as the inking is concerned. We are treated to bold detail work that is very striking, aiding the storyline in its intensity. There are also, of course, Wood's characteristic facial lighting/highlighting technique, weird creatures and a wonderful altar of the monster god. Except for some awkward faces here and there, "The Monster God of Rogor" is a solid job, one that Woodwork collectors should enjoy, and rates a very competent: 4.

THE MASK OF DR. FU MANCHU - 1951
"The Mask of Dr. Fu Manchu" - 27 pages (including front and inside front covers)

This comic is one of the true Wood bonanzas, a book-length story adorned with some of Wood's best non-EC, Avon work. The story is, I suppose, adapted from one of Sax (Arthur Sarsfield Ward) Rohmer's Fu novels, and has all our favorites; inscrutable Chinamen, luscious Oriental women, Sir Denis Nayland Smith, and, of course, the good Dr. Fu Manchu. The story is the usual Oriental menace job, with the good guys beating the forces of evil, but only for the moment.

Wood did some very interesting things in this story. It is an early example of fine line inking, to be found in the months to come in his EC stories. Also there are some effective uses of craftint and textured paper (see inside front cover to the right). There are also beautiful panel layouts that contribute greatly to the Oriental atmosphere, as does the detail work in an Oriental motif that is found throughout the story. Grievances are the lack of detail work in the backgrounds of some panels and the awkwardness of some figures. This is one of Wood's true early classics and rates a very nice: 5

A STAR PRESENTATION #3 (Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde)
May, 1950
"Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" - 27 pages (including cover)
"The Repulsive Dwarf" - 3 pages

This was one of the many Fox comics of the late forties and early fifties that Wood did work for in collaboration with Harry Harrison, now a science fict author. These collaborations were for the most part lackluster, due to Harrison's mediocre talent as an artist. Here and there in both stories are strong traces of Wood influence, but Harrison covers up most Wood's creative spark. To the credit of both stories' plots, the art is sufficiently gloomy. But Harrison's inking is so slapdash at times, that it is truly incre ible. There are LOTS of panels whose backgrounds are filled in with solid black as a short cut in inking, in my opinion at least. All in all, the cover is the bes piece of art in the book, but it cannot compensate for the lack of imagination on the inside of the book. A Star Presentation #3 rates a disappointing: 2.

WESTERN GUNFIGHTERS #22 - October, 1956
"Rustler at Large" - 5 pages

The deputy of the Comancheville jail unwittingly allows the rustler to escape, and then has to redeem himself with the sheriff, the townspeople, and himself by recapturing him. In the process, we learn that the rustler is only a coward when he has no one to back him up. Once again, crime does not pay.

At first appearances, "Rustler at Large" is one of those post-EC, Atlas stories of Wood's that appear to have been drawn in the early rather than the late fifties. This is based on their simplicity, their lack of the detail work characteristic of Woody's EC work. In actuality, they were the herald of Wood's return to simplicity, which first became highly noticeable in the Tower comics of the mid-sixties. This story unfortunately is not on the same level as the Thunder Agents stories, and was obviously a quickie. However, despite the roughness, we can see a maturity here that cannot be found in even such fine early Wood as the Fu Manchu book. Considering the sporadic crudity, faces and bodies are more stylized and well rendered than those in the early jobs. Wood's use of shadows and spotting of blacks is more dramatic and imaginatively employed than earlier. More important as a sign of things to come than as a self-contained entity, "Rustler at Large" rates a: 3.

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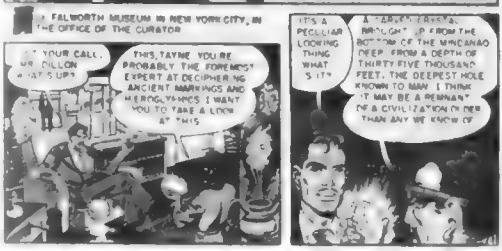
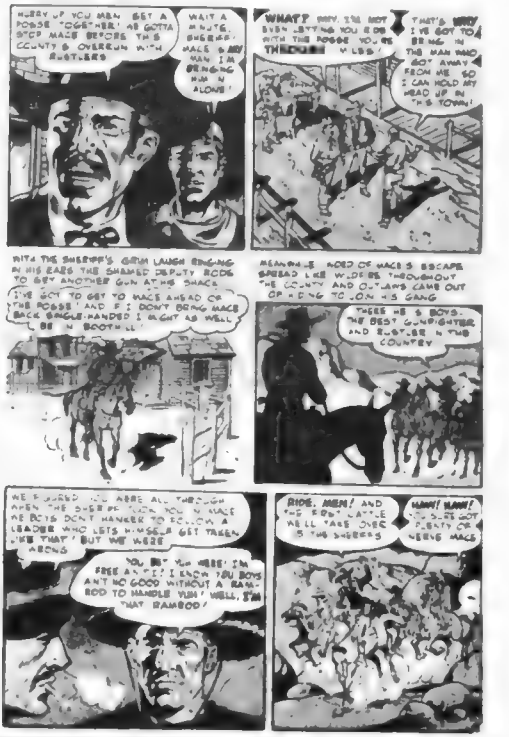
Next issue: More rare and often little known non-EC work of those many talented artists who made EC great!

THE MONSTER GOD OF ROGOR
BY THE HOLY FIRES OF LANTUS, STOP HIM!
IT'S TOO LATE! ROGOR IS DOOMED!
CUT HIM DOWN! CUT HIM DOWN!


AT FALWORTH MUSEUM IN NEW YORK CITY, IN THE OFFICE OF THE CURATOR
IT'S YOUR CALL, MR DILLON — WHAT'S UP?
THIS, TAYNE YOU'RE PROBABLY THE FOREMOST EXPERT AT DECIPHERING ANCIENT MARKINGS AND HEIROGLYPHICS I WANT YOU TO TAKE A LOOK AT THIS
A PECULIAR LOOKING THING WHAT IS IT?
A GREEN CRYSTAL BROUGHT UP FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE MINDANAO DEEP FROM A DEPTH OF THIRTY FIVE THOUSAND FEET. THE DEEPEST HOLE KNOWN TO MAN I THINK IT MAY BE A REMNANT OF A CIVILIZATION OLDER THAN ANY WE KNOW OF

THRILL! AS SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH FOILS FU MANCHU'S PLOT TO STEAL THE MASK OF "EL MOKANNA" AND SACRED RAMOD THAT WOULD UNITE A FANATIC HORDE IN REVOLT
FOLLOW DR FU MANCHU IN HIS NEFARIOUS SCHEME TO TRADE LOVELY RIMA BARTON FOR THE SACRED RELICS
MEET ENCHANTING FAH LO SEE FU MANCHU'S DAUGHTER WHOSE KISS ENSLAVES RIMA'S FIANCE SHAN GREVILLE!
SEE DENIS NAYLAND SMITH IN ATTEMPT TO TAKE THE GOLDEN MASK TO ENGLAND, AND FU MANCHU'S TRY AT PRESENT-DAY PIRACY

The Repulsive DWARF
UGLY DWARF!
AS IS ALWAYS THE CASE WITH A MAN WHO IS DIFFERENT FROM HIS FELLOWS, HE WAS A MAN TO BE PITIED FOR HE WAS TREATED BRUTALLY AND CRUELLY BY THE CHILDREN OF THE VILLAGE WHERE ANOTHER MAN THERE WAS WISDOM AND KINDNESS IN THE DEPTHS OF THAT MISSHAPEN HEART WHEN HE CALLED HIM THE REPULSIVE DWARFMAN
GEED OUT!
MA'AM
YOU MUST NOT KNOW THE CHILDREN HERE, IT'S THEY WHO CRUEL...
NO ONE WANTS ME AROUND BUT YOU ZELLITA — YOU STAY AWAY FROM THEM!
SEND FOR MANO AT ONCE! I'VE BEEN BEATEN!
AH, ZELLITA, YOU ARE MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN EVER!
YOUR WORDS MAKE ME VERY HAPPY FOR MANO
IS FOR MANO! TOUCHES MY ZELLITA, I WILL KILL HIM! ONLY ONE WHO IS KIND TO ME


HURRY UP YOU MEN! GET A POSSE "OGETHER" AS GOTTA STOP MACE BEFORE HE'S COUNTY & OVEREUN WITH SLOTLERS
WAIT A MINUTE, SHERIFF! MACE & ANY MAN I'M BRINGING HIM IN ALONE!
WHAT? MAY I'M NOT EVEN LETTING YOU BE ON WITH THE POSSE YOU'RE TOO OLD!
THAT'S WHY I'VE GOT TO BE THE ONE TO FIND THE MAN WHO GOT AWAY FROM ME SO I CAN HOLD MY HEAD UP IN THIS TOWN!
WITH THE SHERIFF'S GRIM LAUGH RINGING IN HIS EARS THE SHAMED DEPUTY RODE TO GET ANOTHER GUN AT HIS SHACK
I'VE GOT TO GET TO MACE AHEAD OF THE POSSE! AND IF I DON'T BRING MACE BACK SINGLE-HANDED I MIGHT AS WELL BE IN BOOTHILL!
MEANWHILE WORD OF MACE'S ESCAPE SPREAD LIKE WILDFIRE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY AND OUTLAWS CAME OUT OF HIDING TO JOIN HIS GANG
THERE'S 8 BOYS, THE BEST GUNFIGHTER AND SLOTLER IN THIS COUNTRY
WE FIGURED YOU WERE ALL THROUGH WHEN HE SHOT YOU IN MACE AT FIRST, BUT IT'S DON'T HANKER TO FOLLOW A LEADER WHO LETS HIMSELF GET TREED LIKE THAT! BUT WE WERE AROUND
YOU BET YOU WERE! I'M FREE AN' I KNOW YOU BOYS AIN'T NO GOOD WITHOUT A RAM-ROD TO HANDLE YUH! WELL, I'M THAT RAMROD!
RIDE, MEN! AND THE FIRST LATTLE WE'LL TAKE OVER IS THE SHERIFF'S
HAHA! HAHA! YOU'VE GOT PLENTY OF USERS MACE

The 1976 Comic Art Fan Awards Final Ballot
(For Work Dated 1975)

This year's nominating ballot has drawn only a token response from fandom. We hope that the revival of the two ballot system will garner a larger reaction than we have recieved so far. Included with the nominated choices are write-in and no award categories to allow for any disagreements with the nominees.

This ballot may appear in any fanzine, but it must be copied exactly with no admissions or subtractions. We are forced to accept only official ballots because there has been considerable ballot-stuffing in the past. If you cannot acquire a ballot, send us a Self-Addressed Stamped Envelope. Without an SASE, no request for a ballot or the results will be honored. Please send all correspondence and ballots to the following address no later than January 1,1976

1976 Comic Art Fan Awards
Mark Gasper
32-25 167 Street
Flushing, N.Y. 11358

Only ONE vote is permitted, any suspected duplications will not be tabulated. And only one vote per category is allowed. Categories containing more than one choice will not be counted.

Final results will be mailed as quickly as possible to a large number of fanzines. They will also be available to anyone sending us an SASE. As always, our records are open to responsible persons who wish to double-check the results. We welcome and encourage your suggestions and comments concerning our handling of the awards.

Thank you for your co-operation and happy voting!

Mark Gasper and Ken Gale Awards Administrators.

1. Favorite Pro Writer
___Gerry Conway
___Steve Englehart
___Steve Gerber
___Elliot Maggin
___Don McGregor
___David Michelinie
___Doug Moench
___Jim Starlin
___Roy Thomas
___Len Wein
___Marv Wolfman
___No Award
Write in
_____

2. Favorite Pro Penciller
___Neal Adams
___Frank Brunner
___John Buscema
___Dave Cockrum
___Gene Colan
___Mike Grell
___Paul Gulacy
___Jack Kirby
___Craig Russell
___Jim Starlin
___Curt Swan
___No Award
Write in
_____

3. Favorite Pro Inker
___Alfredo Alcala
___D. Bruce Berry
___Dick Giordano
___Klaus Janson
___Steve Leialoha
___Al Milgrom
___Tom Palmer
___Mike Royer
___Joe Sinnott
___Joe Staton
___Wally Wood
___No Award
Write in
_____

4. Favorite Pro Editor
___Gerry Conway
___Bill Dubay
___Joe Kubert
___Joe Orlando
___Julie Schwartz
___Roy Thomas
___Len Wein
___Marv Wolfman
___No Award
Write in_____

5. Favorite Comic Book Story
___Killraven 34 "A Death in the Family"
___Avengers 133-135, Origin of Vision
___Defenders 27-29, Guardians serial
___First Issue Special 9, Dr. Fate issue
___Giant-Size Avengers 4, Wedding of Vision
___Giant-Size Man-Thing 4,"The Kid's Night Out"
___Giant-Size X-Men 1, "Second Genesis"
___Savage Sword 5 "A Witch Shall Be Born"
___Strange Tales 179 "Death Ship"
___Strange Tales 180 "1,000 Clowns"
___Warlock 9, "The Infinity Effect"
___No Award
Write in_____

6. Favorite Newsstand Comic
___Amaz. Adv. (Killraven)
___Avengers
___Dr. Strange
___Legion of Super Heroes
___Savage Sword of Conan
___Spider-Man
___Tomb of Dracula
___Warlock
___X-Men
___No Award
Write in_____

7. Favorite Character
___Bat Man
___Conan
___Dr. Strange
___Howard the Duck
___Pip the Troll
___Spider-Man
___Superman
___Warlock
___No Award
Write in_____

8. Favorite Non-Newsstand Comic
___Amazing World of DC Comics
___Arcade
___Big Apple Comix
___Charlton Bullseye
___EC Reprints
___Furry Freak Bros.
___FOOM
___MFGazette
___MFGuardian
___Orb
___Star*Reach
___Tim Corrigan's Comix
___No Award
Write in_____

9. Favorite Fanzine
___Buyer's Guide
___Canar
___Comic Reader
___Compass
___DFCFR
___Heroine Addict
___Legion Outpost
___Nimbus
___RBCC
___Tales from Texas
___No Award
Write in_____

10. Favorite Fan Writer
___Murray Bishoff
___Martin Greim
___Frank Lovece
___Bob Rodi
___Don Rosa
___The Thompson's
___Jim Van Hise
___Jay Zilber
___No Award
Write in_____

11. Favorite Fan Artist
___Bill Black
___Steve Fabian
___Alan Hanley
___Jack Katz
___Jerry Ordway
___Don Rosa
___Mercy Van Vlack
___No Award
Write in_____

12. Favorite New Talent
___John Byrne
___Chris Cla remont
___Steve Leialoha
___Paul Levitz
___Bill Mantlo
___Gonzalo Mayo
___Don Newton
___George Perez
___Ricardo Villamonte
___No Award
Write in_____

Please fill in;

Name and age_____ _____
Address_____

_____

Source of ballot_____

Signature_____

POINT/ COUNTER POINT

THE COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE

Much flak and praise has been expressed over Robert Overstreet's Comic Book Price Guide, since its conception almost seven years ago. Many matured, seasoned collectors consider it a hindrance to what was once a hobby, producing artificial prices for many worthless items. While others, many of them new to the field, look toward the Price Guide as a blessing, setting a standard for the value of their comics, preventing a minority of unscrupulous dealers from taking advantage of their inexperience. Comic Book Price Guide; blessing in disguise? Such is the question for this, the second installment of our Point-Counter Point series.

POINT

by John Baglem

At the outset of THE COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE by Robert Overstreet, many, including myself, were skeptical of its value. 1970 marked a year of hope, a turning point for comic book collectors. Since 1965, prices had shot upward at a disgusting rate. What had begun as a spare time consumer for many, had become a profitable medium for a few. Prices in 1970 had begun to stabilize. Many hoped that a peak had been reached, a point where the artificially inflated price of certain items would spiral. I was among those hoping for a collapse in the market, and, with the advent of the PRICE GUIDE, I began to think that this "dream" would not come true. But I, among others who instantly criticized the PRICE GUIDE, forgot one important thing. Up until its arrival, many prices created by the few dealing in comics were artificial, prices kept at their ridiculous level only by those few caught up in the craze, too inexperienced, too gullable to have the sense to hold out. But with the distribution of the PRICE GUIDE, those prices suddenly became a reality, as hundreds, even thousands entered the field. This new influx made the size too great for the old way of dealers lists and cons. The COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE created its own need, a need for which we would be hopeless without today. What was once a hindrance, is now a blessing, no longer masked in disguise.

The answer to why comic fandom is a huge, thriving community all to itself is simple - THE COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE. No other single publication, event, or other conceivable occurance has had as much impact as those six editions. When asked, most collectors with four years or less experience (who comprise fandom's majority), will mention the Guide in explaining how they got their start. Frequent ads in many fan and adzines are simply entitled "Below Guide". And no one can deny frenzy each March in anticipation of the new years edition. Some suppliers go as far as guaranteeing arrival before all others. And when the Guide finally does arrive, there is no single event-bar none-that attracts more attention than the new price listings. Everyone reviews the new edition, even those scorning the guide. For the guide is fandom, and fandom is the guide.

Many "price guides" have been attempted since fandom's conception some 15 or so years ago. And of all the editions put forth, why is it that only the COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE by Bob Overstreet is the one to receive so much attention, let alone survive? Why has so much furor been expressed over this one effort, while others have been laughed aside? Why? Because the truth annoy's many, but the truth cannot be ignored. When Darwin set forth his theories on the origin of man, many reacted strongly, negatively. But not because his ideas were anything new. Many before had formulated theories of man's origin opposed to that of the Bible, only to receive a polite laugh and slanted eyebrows from fellow scholars. But what set Darwin apart from the others was his evidence, evidence so strong as to make the world stand up and take notice. And so with the PRICE GUIDE. Collector's could not ignore the truth any longer. Fandom had grown, enlarged to such proportions as to shoot prices so high as to make a reference guide no laughing matter. The PRICE GUIDE of today is the truth, whether we want to believe it or not.

Robert Overstreet is human. Many times a price quoted in THE COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE will not be a national average, rather a certain area's current price. But when tens of thousands of new prices are to be listed, perfection remains remote. And there are those items which, in the collector's mind, will always remain priceless, with no compensation at any price. Only an estimate can be made on a collector's heart.

Is the COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE such a hindrance? Was it really better back when, with less money but less prestige? Can a comparison be made to fandom's infancy and its adulthood of today? The PRICE GUIDE put the baby on its feet, to no longer crawl, but to walk among men, and be proud of its accomplishments. Let us not weaken and fall, but walk on. We have the means, we have the cause.

COUNTER POINT

by Doug Haines

Having aged 365 days since writing the previous article (at no fault of Jim Van Hise), maturing not only physically, but psychologically as well, I can now state that my fascination with THE COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE, as well as the "hobby" as a whole, is all but ended. Not that I have a lack of concern over the future of comic collecting, but I have been, in effect, priced out. The value of the comic collector's dollar has been deflated on certain items as to make many collector's, like me, give up the bother. And this has not come about by the slow trend of a creeping inflationary market, created by supply and demand. Instead, each April the prices shoot upward, as much as 100% or more on some items. And this drastic change, virtually nationwide, is the result of that item which was originally designed to just confirm prices, not create them. John, you're right when you state that the PRICE GUIDE created its own need. A need by those dealing in comics for profit. A "need" being stuffed down the collector's

throat. In 1970, there were very few large adzines. But today they are the mainstay of fandom, giving national averages every week, in a form where a high priced advertiser prices himself right out of the market. True competition dictates here. No one person decides the cost of every single comic book ever made. We don't need the PRICE GUIDE - the price guide needs us.

The reason why comic fandom is such a huge organization cannot be credited to one publication. Long before I had even heard of the GUIDE, I was reading and seeing of the comic movement. Who can forget the publicity attributed to the selling of an ACTION #1 in 1973, or the front page news given to various national cons in the early to mid '70's? This new collective medium caught the public's fancy, bringing thousands into the field out of curiousity. Many publications arose during this period, capitalizing on the fresh appeal of comic collecting. 1970 marked the first edition of THE COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE. The second, in an almost completely new, much slicker format, didn't come out until 1972, when the opportunity presented itself. Many bought it just as a curiousity. Few considered it dead serious. But today, with an influx of new collectors, attracted by tales of big money, the PRICE GUIDE is taken seriously. These "overnight" collectors, who know absolutely nothing about the field tote around their guide as if it were the bible. And the junk dealers, who sell their flea bitten rags which they call comics, use that guide also. And when the two meet, next year's listing goes up. We may want the PRICE GUIDE as part of fandom, but we don't want the "fandom" that is the guide.

To compare Charles Darwin and his brilliant essays with Robert Overstreet, and his "estimations", is a comparison I do not acknowledge nor comprehend. Darwin changed the ideas of a world, Overstreet seems unable to make up even his own mind. Constant inaccuracies, such as the listing of CONAN #3 as rare (then, in later editions, as rare in some areas), and the yearly mistake of HOUSE OF SECRETS #92 as not, coupled with constant outrageously inaccurate prices, leaves me with lack of faith in his process undertaken in establishing national prices. And the number of people who accept these prices as truthful, when just a few days before they were considerably different, leaves me questioning the intelligence of many. When a dealer wasn't selling at his price before he noticed a much higher one in the guide, why the hell does he increase it? And more importantly, why do we the buyers believe it? The PRICE GUIDE of today, or any other year, is not the truth, so why do so many believe that it is? Are we so far lost that we accept things without question? Well, I'll ask questions, and if enough follow, maybe we'll get some answers.

Is THE COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE a hindrance? Physically no. I myself receive the new year's edition every Christmas, and I enjoy its reading. But when blindly accepted as fact, this tool of survival becomes a weapon of destruction. Let's use it as it was originally intended, as an aid to the enjoyment of a hobby. And that's what comic collecting is, a hobby. Let's keep it that way.

THIS IS WHAT YOU'RE MISSING BY NOT SUBSCRIBING TO THE EXCITING NEW ROCKET'S BLAST COMICOLLECTOR

This issue of the RBCC is just an example of what you can have delivered to you every six weeks, without fail, should you decide to subscribe. As regular features, each issue presents Don Rosa's INFORMATION CENTER as well as the continuing adventures of the characters in his comic strip THE PERTWILLABY PAPERS. We also have CRITIQUE, fandom's only regular and in-depth review column. THE E.C. ARTIST COLLECTOR is another regular which examines the non EC art of the many fine artists who comprised the staff of that much collected company. COMIC COLLECTOR'S COMMENTS by Howard Siegel covers subjects of interest to the comic fan. POINT / COUNTER POINT is a recent addition but is already proving to be popular as it explores issues of importance to fandom. FILMS FANTASTIQUE returned this issue after a long absence and we'll be striving to make it better than ever, as this issue's installment testifies. R.C. Harvey's COMICOPIA is another regular comic oriented feature which discusses subjects relating to comic art involving both the theory and history.

Many fine artists regularly contribute to the RBCC and they include such talent as Steve Fabian, Tom Sutton, Mike Zeck as well as extremely talented fan artists like Don Rosa, Ralph Fowler, Ron Wilber, Kerry Gammill and more. As you can see by this issue I set very high artistic standards, so that the fan art is of just as high a calibre as the work done by the professionals!

Next issue will have a full color front cover painting by Frank Brunner on a weird science fiction theme. Other upcoming work includes covers by Mike Zeck of The Destroyer (new version), Blue Beetle and Thor. A special FLASH GORDON issue is planned for the near future which will include art by Mike Zeck, Steve Fabian, Ron Wilber and much much more. And if you think the subject has been worn out, are you ever wrong! So don't delay, subscribe today! [SEE PAGE TWO FOR SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION].